

"MY FORTUNE'S MADE!"

BY MARY ALEXINA SMITH.



My young friend, Cora Lee, was a gay, dashing girl, fond of dress, and looking always as if, to use a common saying, just out of a band box. Cora was a belle, of course, and had many admirers. Among the number of these, was a young man named Edward Douglass, who was the very "pink" of neatness, in all matters pertaining to dress, and exceeding particular in his observance of the little proprieties of life.

I saw, from the first, that if Douglass pressed his suit, Cora's heart would be an easy conquest; and so it proved.

"How admirably they are fitted for each other," I remarked to my husband, on the night of the wedding. "Their tastes are similar, and their habits so much alike, that no violence will be done to the feelings of either, in the more intimate associations that marriage brings. Both are neat in person and orderly by instinct; and both have good principles."

"From all present appearances, the match will be a good one," replied my husband. There was, I thought, something like reservation in his tone.

"Do you really think so?" I said, a little ironically; for Mr. Smith's approval of the marriage was hardly warm enough to suit my fancy.

"Oh, certainly! Why not?" he replied.

I felt a little fretted at my husband's mode of speaking; but made no further remark on the subject. He is never very enthusiastic, nor sanguine; and did not mean, in this instance, to doubt the fitness of the parties for happiness in the marriage state, as I half imagined. For myself, I warmly approved my friend's choice, and called her husband a lucky man to secure for his companion through life, a woman so admirably fitted to make one like him happy. But a visit which I paid to Cora, one day, about six weeks after the honey-moon had expired, lessened my enthusiasm on the subject, and awoke some unpleasant doubts. It happened that I called soon after breakfast. Cora met me in the parlor, looking like a very fright. She wore a soiled and rumpled morning wrapper; her hair was in papers; and she had on dirty stockings, and a pair of old slippers down at the heels.

"Bless me, Cora!" said I. "What is the matter? Have you been sick?"

"No. Why do you ask? Is my dishabille rather on the extreme?"

"Candidly, I think it is, Cora," was my frank answer.

"Oh, well! No matter," she carelessly replied, "my fortune's made."

"I don't clearly understand you," said I.

"I'm married, you know."

"Yes; I am aware of that fact."

"No need of being so particular in dress now."

"Why not?"

"Didn't I just say?" replied Cora. "My fortune's made. I've got a husband."

Beneath an air of jesting, was apparent the real earnestness of my friend.

"You dressed with a careful regard to taste and neatness in order to win Edward's love?" said I.

"Certainly I did."

"And should you not do the same in order to retain it?"

"Why, Mrs. Smith! Do you think my husband's affection goes no deeper than my dress? I should be very sorry indeed to think that. He loves me for myself."

"No doubt of that in the world, Cora. But remember, that he cannot see what is in your mind except by what you do or say. If he admires your taste, for instance, it is not from any abstract appreciation of it, but because the taste manifests itself in what you do. And, depend upon it, he will find it a very hard matter to approve and admire your correct taste in dress, for instance, when you appear before him, day after day in your present unattractive attire. If you do not dress well for your husband's eyes, for whose eyes, pray do you dress? You are as neat when abroad, as you were before your marriage."

"As to that, Mrs. Smith, common decency requires me to dress well when I go upon the street, or into company; to say nothing of the pride one naturally feels in looking well."

"And does not the same common decency and natural pride argue as strongly in favor of your dressing well at home and for the eye of your husband, whose approval, and whose admiration must be dearer to you than the approval and admiration of the whole world?"

"But he doesn't want to see me rigged out in silks and satins all the time. A pretty bill my dress maker would have against him in that event. Edward has more sense than that, I flatter myself."

"Street or ball room attire is one thing, Cora; and becoming home apparel another. We look for both in their place."

Thus I argued with the thoughtless young wife, but my words made no impression. When abroad, she dressed with exquisite taste, and was lovely to look upon; but at home she was careless and slovenly, and made it almost impossible for those who saw her to realize that she was the brilliant beauty they had met in company but a short time before. But even this, did not last long. I noticed, after a few months, that the habits of home were confirming themselves, and becoming apparent abroad. Her fortune was made, and why should she now waste time, or employ her thoughts about matters of personal appearance

The habits of Mr. Douglass, on the contrary, did not change. He was as orderly as before; and dressed with the same regard to neatness. He never appeared at the breakfast table in the morning without being shaved; nor did he lounge about in the evening in his shirt sleeves. The slovenly habits into which Cora had fallen, annoyed him seriously; and still more so, when her carelessness about her appearance began to manifest itself abroad as well as at home. When he hinted any thing on the subject, she did not hesitate to reply, in a jesting manner, that her fortune was made, and she need not trouble herself any longer about how she looked.

Douglass did not feel very much complimented; but as he had his share of good sense, he saw that to assume a cold and offended manner would do no good.

"If your fortune is made, so is mine," he replied on one occasion, quite coolly, and indifferently. Next morning he made his appearance at the breakfast table, with a beard of twenty-four hours' growth.

"You haven't shaved this morning, dear," said Cora, to whose eyes the dirty looking face of her husband was particularly unpleasant.

"No," he replied, carelessly. "It's a serious trouble to shave every day."

"But you look so much better with a cleanly shaved face."

"Looks are nothing—ease and comfort, everything," said Douglass.

"But common decency, Edward."

"I see nothing indecent in a long beard," replied the husband.

Still Cora argued, but in vain. Her husband went off to his business with his unshaven face.

"I don't know whether to shave or not," said Douglass, next morning, running over his rough face, upon which was a beard of forty-eight hours' growth. His wife had hastily thrown on a wrapper, and, with slipshod feet, and head like a mop, was lounging in a large rocking chair awaiting the breakfast bell.

"For mercy's sake, Edward, don't go any longer with that shockingly dirty face," spoke up Cora. "If you knew how dreadfully you looked."

"Looks are nothing," replied Edward, stroking his beard.

"Why, what's come over you all at once?"

"Nothing, only it's such a trouble to shave every day."

"But you didn't shave yesterday."

"I know; I am just as well off to-day, as if I had. So much saved at any rate."

But Cora urged the matter, and her husband finally yielded, and mowed down the luxuriant growth of beard.

"How much better you do look!" said the young wife. "Now don't go another day without shaving."

"But why should I take so much trouble about mere looks? I'm just as good with a long beard as with a short one. It's a great deal of trouble to shave every day. You can leave me just as well; and why need I care about what others say or think?"

On the following morning, Douglass appeared not

only with a long beard, but with a bosom and collar that were both soiled and rumpled.

"Why, Edward! How you do look!" said C

"You've neither shaved nor put on a clean shirt."

Edward stroked his face, and ran his fingers along the edge of his collar, remarking, indifferently, as he did so.

"It's no matter. I look well enough. This being so very particular in dress, is waste of time; and I'm getting tired of it."

And in this trim Douglass went off to his business, much to the annoyance of his wife, who could not bear to see her husband looking so slovenly.

Gradually the declension from neatness went on, until Edward was quite a match for his wife, and yet, strange to say, Cora had not taken the hint, broad as it was. In her own person she was as untidy as ever.

About six months after their marriage, we invited a few friends to spend a social evening with us, Cora and her husband among the number. Cora came alone, quite early, and said that her husband was very much engaged and could not come until after tea. My young friend had not taken much pains with her attire. Indeed, her appearance mortified me, as it contrasted so decidedly with that of the other ladies who were present; and I could not help suggesting to her that she was wrong in being so indifferent about her dress. But she laughingly replied to me—

"You know my fortune's made now, Mrs. Smith. I can afford to be negligent in these matters. It's a great waste of time to dress so much."

I tried to argue against this, but could make no impression upon her.

About an hour after tea, and while we were all engaged in pleasant conversation, the door of the parlor opened, and in walked Mr. Douglass. At first glance I thought I must be mistaken. But no, it was Edward himself. But what a figure he did cut! His uncombed hair was standing up, in stiff spikes, in a hundred different directions; his face could not have felt the touch of a razor for two or three days; and he was guiltless of clean linen for at least the same length of time. His vest was soiled; his boots unblackened; and there was an unmistakable hole in one of his elbows.

"Why, Edward!" exclaimed his wife, with a look of mortification and distress, as her husband came across the room, with a face in which no consciousness of the figure he cut could be detected.

"Why my dear fellow! What is the matter?" said my husband, frankly; for he perceived that the ladies were beginning to titter, and that the gentlemen were looking at each other, and trying to repress their risible tendencies; and therefore deemed it best to throw off all reserve on the subject.

"The matter? Nothing's the matter, I believe. Why do you ask?" Douglass looked grave.

"Well may he ask what's the matter?" broke in Cora, energetically. "How could you come here in such a plight?"

"In such a plight?" And Edward looked down at himself; felt his beard, and ran his fingers through his hair. "What's the matter? Is any thing wrong?"

"You look as if you'd just waked up from a nap a week with your clothes on, and come off without washing your face or combing your hair," said my husband.

"Oh!" And Edward's countenance brightened a little. Then he said, with much gravity of manner—

"I've been extremely hurried of late; and only left my store a few minutes ago. I hardly thought it worth while to go home to dress up. I knew we were all friends here. Besides, *as my fortune is made*"—and he glanced with a look not to be mistaken, toward his wife—"I don't feel called upon to give as much attention to mere dress as formerly. Before I was married, it was necessary to be particular in these matters, but now its of no consequence."

I turned toward Cora. Her face was like crimson. In a few moments she arose and went quickly from the room. I followed her, and Edward came

after us, pretty sore. He found his wife in tears and sobbing almost hysterically.

"I've got a carriage at the door," he said to me, aside, half laughing, half serious. "So help her on with her things, and we'll retire in disorder."

"But its too bad in you, Mr. Douglass," replied I.

"Forgive me for making your house the scene of this lesson to Cora," he whispered. "It had to be given, and I thought I could venture to trespass upon your forbearance."

"I'll think about that," said I, in return.

In a few minutes Cora and her husband retired, and in spite of good breeding and everything else, we all had a hearty laugh over the matter, on my return to the parlor, where I explained the curious little scene that had just occurred.

How Cora and her husband settled the affair between themselves, I never inquired. But one thing is certain; I never saw her in a slovenly dress afterwards, at home or abroad. She was cured.

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAP. I.—THE REVEL.

Black and more densely dark the brow of Heaven
Bent in its wrath above the heaving sea—
Fiercely athwart it surging clouds were driven,
And whirlwind's tore them in mad revelry.
Now watery mountains gather up the deep,
And wildly toss their foam-capp'd heads on high,
Onward—still onward, bellowing they sweep,
Mocking the winds that rush so fiercely by.

"Fill up—fill up, one and all! Here's a health to old England, and joy to old England. Hurra!"

They started up—those half dozen lordly revellers, and quaffed the toast standing. "Rowley—Rowley, and old England!" rang cheerily through the chamber, while the goblets flashed and circled on high, tossing a shower of ruby drops over the festal board and the Persian carpet, even to that space beyond, where a margin of the oaken floor lay uncovered with the polish of a mirror on its dark surface.

"Three times three," those voices shouted forth—"Rowley, Rowley, and old England!" Then one of the guests planted a foot upon the damask cushion of his chair, while he seized a flask and refilled his goblet to the brim.

Raising the costly vessel on high, he said. "And now fill up to our friend and host. Let us drink to the restoration of this noble estate, and more noble title! Fill up to the Lord of Bowdon!"

Again there was a clashing of crystal flasks and goblets as they jarred together amid the rich gurgling of wine, and the merry hum of voices, mellowed, but scarcely yet excited by the revel.

The goblets brimmed with wine again, and then all eyes were turned upon a young man, who, standing at the head of the table, had proposed the preliminary toast of his king and country. As the sparkling eyes of his friends were turned upon him, his fine features flashed with gratified feeling. A smile beautiful in its brilliancy parted his lips, already warmed to a vivid scarlet and damp with wine. As the light poured over his white forehead, and the dishevelled hair that fell

in perfumed curls to his shoulders, nothing could be imagined more perfect in manly beauty than the young lord of the castle.

"My lords, my friends," said the young man, and his fine voice trembled with generous emotion. "Upon this spot where, fourteen years ago, my father held his wife and son to his heart, before he fled from the land that had exiled his sovereign and banished his friends, I cannot receive your congratulations without many turbulent and conflicting emotions. The lands that my noble father sacrificed, rather than abandon the son of his murdered king, are now mine! King Charles II. has been munificent in his gratitude to the son of that man who struggled foremost, and lost in the cause of his martyred sire—the man who, spurning all favor from the traitor coward, abandoned the home of his forefathers—country, everything, to perish broken-hearted, an exile, and in want, at the feet of his young sovereign. The broad lands, this massive old castle, where his ancestors first saw the light, are mine—mine by the gift of the king he served—loved and died for. But even thus—even here—surrounded by so many warm-hearted and staunch friends—some mournful feelings will force themselves to a heart which should be filled only with gratitude, and to the lips that should breathe nothing but welcome to guests so noble, and friends so true. Gentlemen this is a day of triumph to my house: and I, its just representative, should stand before you a proud and happy man. But you will forgive me, one and all. I cannot forget the price by which all this has been secured. I stand before you, Lord Bowdon, but of all my house I am alone. My noble father—the sweet and gentle lady who gave me birth—lie side by side in a foreign land. Therefore you will forgive the natural regrets that must perforce sadden my voice and mingle with the grateful thrill of my heart, as I respond to your congratulations. Now, my friends, let me claim one moment from your joy—one tribute to the dead. Let us drain a cup to the fame of my father—to the memory of my mother!"

The young man had begun this little speech as we have said, with a flushed cheek and sparkling eyes; but as he went on, the color faded from his fine features, and mists stole over his eyes, giving them an expression tender and mournful, beyond any power of description which we possess. His hands trembled as he took up a wine flask, and filled the golden drinking cup before him.

"My father—my mother!" he said, in a clear, but subdued voice, bending his stately head reverently, and casting his eyes around the board, as his friends filled up their goblets in mournful silence.

"To the memory of as brave a man, and as fair a lady as ever perished for king and country!" answered one of the oldest guests, as the wine cups were raised with a sort of funeral solemnity.

Instead of the shout which had followed the two previous toasts drank that evening—this, to the dead—was followed by profound silence at the table, and by sobs, loud and deep, from a group of aged servitors who had crowded around one of the doors, eager to hear their young lord's speech.

Up to this moment the revellers at Bowdon had been so cheerfully occupied that they had given no thought to anything beyond the luxurious apartment in which the feast was spread. Warmth and merriment pervaded everything around them; wax tapers, pure and fragrant as perfumed snow, poured forth their light, down from the candlestick of massive silver upon the rich plate, intermingled with cut crystal and one or two old drinking cups, fretted inside and out with precious stones, till the sparkle of many jewels flashed up through the wine as it was quaffed. Further off, this pure flood of light was broken into flashes and shadows over the exquisite panneling of the walls; and the furniture of gilded and massive oak, upon which were cushions of crimson, damask, or velvet, was lighted up to the warm glow of a cherry, or shadowed down to a deep purple.

Again it glowed out, or was lost in the depths of rich gemmed velvet that fell in a thousand heavy folds over sashes of colored glass closed in with shutters, grappled to the thick walls so closely that no ordinary sound could penetrate to the lordly group seated around the table. Within, all was a scene of secluded and sumptuous enjoyment; and it was not till the young lord, hurried on by feelings which he could not control, had called upon them to drink that funeral pledge to his father's memory, that any of the revellers was aware of the tempest that had been gathering along the coast, and was then howling fiercely around the old battlements and turrets of the castle. But in the dead silence that followed that pledge the tempest made itself heard, for urged beyond all rules of discipline by a desire to hear their young lord when he addressed his friends, the retainers had flung open a door leading to the great hall, and, all at once, came the sound of the storm rushing through the old hall, along the winding corridors, and into that sumptuous chamber with a suddenness and violence that startled the guests from the profound silence into which they had fallen.

The wail of the elements thus coming upon the young lord and his friends, just as their feelings had been touched and saddened by an allusion to the

dead, had a powerful effect. One man started up, exclaiming—"Heavens, what a storm, why the night must be terrible!"

"You see," said the young lord, looking round upon his disturbed guests, and striving to rally his own spirits: "you see what reception the Cornwall winds are giving me, fortunately these old walls are used to them; many a gallant ship has been dashed to atoms against the rocks yonder, but not a stone of the castle has ever given way. 'Close that door, Wilson,' he continued, addressing the aged butler: "close the door and let the winds rave on; they must be fierce indeed to reach us here. Come, my lords, fill up, fill up! I did not think to damp your spirits thus; Wilson bring us the flasks from yon cooler; that wine is half a century older than I am, my lords!"

The storm was shut out once more, and the chamber resumed its festal aspect. The company was composed of men accustomed to sudden changes, and of that habit of life which gives complete control over the sensations. They were all cavaliers, or the sons of cavaliers, who had learned the self-command taught by danger and suffering; and by no means persons to give a mournful reminiscence more than its due claim upon their hearts. At the call of their youthful host they flung off the depression that had chilled them for a moment. Nothing seemed capable of checking the headlong spirit of their mirth. Like half England, at that time, Lord Bowdon's guests were beside themselves with the triumphs of the Restoration. The enthusiasm attending the return of Charles II. to his father's throne was still at its height. The popularity of this good humored monarch had met with no reaction; and, among all his followers, the guests at Bowdon had been most favored. It must have been a sad event, indeed, that could have permanently disturbed the triumphant mirth of a group like this. So, the revel commenced again.

CHAP. II.—THE RESCUE

And then was rent that fearful cloud
With gusts of fiery rain;
And Heaven's artillery thundered loud
Above the heaving main.
It seemed as if the stars, at last,
Shaken with mighty ire,
Had flung upon the raging blast
Their cataracts of fire!

THE feast was fast verging into a carouse when the door flew open once more, and the old housekeeper of Bowdon rushed in. She was pale as death, and her garments were dripping with rain.

"My lord, forgive me, but the storm is so dreadful; never in my life did I see lightning so late in the year; never at any time *such* lightning. There is a ship in the channel, a large ship, I saw it twice as the lightning struck. That ship, my lord, it will be dashed against the rocks. It was heading upon them then!"

Lord Bowdon started up, and instantly the festal board was abandoned. Flinging aside the drapery of a window that opened upon the channel, the young lord forced back the shutter and leaned forth. His friends crowded around him, and over them a storm of

gleety rain came driving into the warm apartment, saturating their rich garments and extinguishing the lights; while sheets of flame took the wind and leaping from the fire-place, rolled up the mass of sculptured marble that towered above it, sending a bright glare over the confused scene.

"Heavens! what a night!" cried one of the guests, shrinking back: "how the sea rolls. It seems leaping against the castle walls!"

"I can see nothing," cried the young lord, drawing in his head, and shaking the rain from his perfumed curls; "there may be a ship—if so, God help it. This terrible wind is blowing toward us, and nothing can withstand it."

That moment a sheet of lightning came, as it were, upon the wings of the wind, and rolled in waves of lurid flame over the channel. It was but an instant, but there, laboring among the waters, tossing and heaving like a wounded animal, was some sort of a vessel. It came driving along, directly upon a reef of rocks that lay hidden along the shore, and which formed the first strata of the bold eminence on which the castle was built.

"There is a vessel!" said Lord Bowdon, and his face was pale as he turned it upon his anxious guests, "with many persons on board!"

"What can be done?—how can we aid them?" cried one of the guests; for all had become agitated and anxious. "Is there no boat?—could one live in this roar of waters?"

"You forget; I but arrived to-day," answered the young lord, greatly agitated. "But I will see, there must be boats or something. Go, Mrs. Brown, call up the people. If that ship is lost, we must save the poor seamen!"

The housekeeper who stood by the entrance wringing her hands and greatly distressed, faltered out that the people had already gone down to the shore, and were about to launch a boat.

Again Lord Bowdon leaned out of the window. The cold, Autumnal rain came down in sheets. The winds grew more furious each instant, and seemed to tear the lightning into threads of fire as it fell, giving startling effect to the darkness, but revealing nothing. At last a flash, more broad and powerful, gave the vessel to sight. She was tugging at her anchor, the waves tossing and roaring about her like a battalion of white war horses mad with the scent of battle. Every plunge she made dragged her nearer and nearer to the shore. The lightning revealed for one moment the whole terrible scene. A group of men, Lord Bowdon's retainers, were upon the rocks striving to launch a boat. That single flash saw it dashed back upon the rocks literally into atoms. Then came inky darkness again, in which the elements seemed to wrangle and shriek more and more fiercely.

"I can stand this no longer," cried the young lord. "Let us go down to the shore, and be ready to give help: we can find ropes if nothing else."

"Yes, let us go! Let us go!" cried the cavaliers, ready for any enterprize where danger was to be found: and the group sallied forth.

"And I," said the brave old housekeeper: "I too will go, there may be women on board—God help them!"

And the housekeeper mingled with the lordly group, lighting their way through the storm with a small lantern, which was ever and anon almost twisted from her hand by the wind. Through the lawn and copse down to the beetling rocks the cavaliers made their way, guided only by the feeble lantern, and unable to see the peril which surrounded their descent along the rocks that had been rendered slippery by the drifting spray. It was now deep in the night, and the storm still increasing. Long before they reached the shelf of rock upon which Lord Bowdon's retainers were assembled, the group of cavaliers was drenched through and through. But they took their station among the humbler, but scarcely less courageous men, who had preceded them in an errand of mercy, and braved the elements with the meanest: united purpose and strong feeling for a time levelling all ideas of difference and rank.

And now the lightning came less frequently, but in broader flashes. Every gleam of fire lighted up a scene more terrible than the last. The foam-crested waves dashed together with more maddening violence; the winds grew sharper and howled among the waters. The rocks loomed over them black and dripping with foam; and there in the midst was that fated vessel heaving slowly—but oh, how surely—on to her fate. There stood the dark group from the castle with a feeble lantern in their midst, shuddering and chilled to the bone, but ready to risk life and limb when such risk could avail in saving life.

And so hours went by, till at length there came upon the horizon, below the massive wall of blackness that shut in the Heavens—a line of pale grey light—the gloomy dawn that was to usher in a scene of death. Slowly, and as if some reluctant spirit was withdrawing the torn folds of a pall from the face of the waters—that ship was revealed scarcely a cable's length from the rocks that here and there lifted their black heads amid the foam—and now those upon the shore could see all that was passing on the deck of that doomed vessel; and terrible, terrible was the sight!

Women were kneeling there, white with fear, drenched, and cowering to the wet planks; the wind tearing through their garments, and tossing their wild tresses, now over the white and upturned faces, then out among the ropes or around the arms, stretched forth in fearful entreaty to the black Heavens, or to the group on shore. Men too, stout men were groveling upon the deck, terror-stricken even as the women, and more abject, more helpless in their dread. Others stood up pale, courageous and statue-like, looking death firmly in the face, and yet quick and resolute to seize upon any chance of safety that presented itself. Old weather beaten sailors were stretching their brawny arms to Heaven, or tossing them wildly toward the shore; some were busy lashing themselves to the rigging; some stood motionless; and other brave old tars gathered the children to their bosoms, and tried to shelter their chilled limbs from the storm, and encouraged the despairing women to cling around their iron limbs for support. Oh, it was terrible that crowd of doomed beings drifting inch by inch into eternity—every tug at the cable, every groan of the rifted timbers was answered by gasps of fear, and by

shrieks that the winds mocked like demons. On—on—on the vessel drifted, and still the storm increased.

And those on shore watched the vessel. It came through the storm of waters with sharp, half-curbed plunges, like a wild prairie horse with its hot blood on fire with the first girding of a lasso. Every sweep of the sea was dismantling her. The wind crashed through her already shattered rigging, tearing off spars, masts, and cordage with every howl. Inch by inch she had dragged her anchor. A ledge of rocks lay just beneath her bow. Still the cable held, and in that was a few minutes more of life. Those few minutes, oh, how terribly precious they seemed! How those poor creatures prayed, not for life—they knew that all was over—but for a few minutes more of the sharp agony that was all of life left to them.

They did not hear the cable when it broke, the storm was too loud—but oh, what a yell was that when the vessel leaped up in the mad waters, and plunged upon the reef half over those black rocks. Her mighty hull was broken. A sharper crash of timbers; a cry—oh, that cry, never did the wind rise in after years that its memory did not chill the hearts of those who could hear, but give no aid.

She went down, that noble vessel, stern foremost between the rocks that had torn her asunder, and then flung her off—and with her—oh, Heavens! with her went down all of life that had cumbered her deck a moment before.

And those who watched from the shore saw it. The ropes already coiled dropped from their hands. The women covered their pale faces, and sank shuddering upon their knees; groans burst from the white lips of the men, and they gazed wildly at each other.

Not all—not all. There had yet a breath of life escaped from that vessel. A broken spar came toward them, rising and falling with the waves—and upon it—yes, yes, it was not foam, but the white garments of a female, and clinging to them, grappling her with his arms to the spar, was another human being. Man or child no one thought to conjecture: it was a human being—there was something to do—something to be saved.

“Disperse along the shore; the spar may drift to any point!” cried Lord Bowdon, casting off his saturated tunic, and leaving his person free for a plunge into the waves.

Instantly the platform of rock upon which the cavaliers had been grouped, was abandoned by all but Lord Bowdon; the rest were ready at various points with ropes and such means of succor as were at hand.

The spar was yet tossing upon the waters, and still those two forms clung to it. Now the white garments of the female were whirled in the eddying foam, then both the spar and those who held to it shot down into the gulf of waters, and seemed lost forever. Still it neared the shore a little with each wave. The two helpless creatures were evidently almost exhausted; the female still held feebly to the spar; but the other was dashed off and swept in among the rocks. Lord Bowdon could restrain himself no longer. Reckless of the danger, he plunged into the boiling sea; that moment the female lost her hold on the spar, but Bowdon caught her, and buffeted his way to the shore, bringing her in his arms. He bore her back to the shelter of a cliff, and laid her gently down, shouting aloud for his companions. They came, carrying with them a young boy apparently quite dead. Lord Bowdon saw, for the first time, that the creature he had saved was a young girl. The very heart in his bosom was benumbed with cold, but a thrill as of fire passed through it as he gazed upon those sweet and marble-like features. Her dark tresses were still flaked with foam; and the long, wet lashes upon the round, but deathly white cheek, was all that relieved that form from the beauty and lifelessness of a statue. The garments clung around it in close, heavy folds; and the small hands that were half lost in them were cold, stiff, and perfect as the most beautiful fragment of ancient sculpture.

As his companions came up, bearing the other sufferer, Bowdon hastily snatched his own dripping surcoat from the rock, and, kneeling down, spread it reverently over the senseless girl. He could not endure that other eyes should gaze upon her beauty as he had done.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

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[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAP. III.—THE SICK CHAMBER.

*She lay like an angel lost in sleep
Where a dream of death had bound her.*

In one of the dim and richly empaneled chambers of Bowdon Castle, lay the young creature whom its lord had saved. Pale as marble, and except a faint flutter of the breath, quite as still, her delicate form rested upon the velvet bed enveloped by shadows, and only rendered more deathly by the rich hues that fell around her.

Everything in the chamber had an air of gloomy grandeur. The tall, white plumes waving above the masses of silk that fell around the couch; the mirrors in their ebony frames, elaborately entwined with silver; the thick carpets, and the fire-place where andirons of beaten silver supported the logs of a glowing wood fire. All were in massive contrast with the pale and delicate girl who lay in the midst so still and death-like.

Other persons were in the room. A thin, little man in black, sat near the head of the couch, and in a large, easy chair by the fire-place. The old housekeeper of Bowdon had fallen into a doze while watching the contents of a silver posset cup which stood upon a handful of coals upon the hearth.

It was now verging toward nightfall. The man in black drew forth a large chronometer from his bosom, and, touching the little hand that fell over the bed, seemed feeling for the pulse which was so faint, that, for a time, he was in doubt if it had not ceased to beat altogether. He bent over the fair girl, and his thin features cast off something of their grave expression as he felt the almost imperceptible rise of her breath against his cheek.

"Dame Weld—dame Weld!" he said, in an eager whisper, going across the room on tip-toe, and shaking the old woman by the arm. "Come, come, you have slept long enough! See you not that the spiced wine is boiling over?"

The old housekeeper started up, rubbed her eyes, and looked wildly on the doctor.

"Sure enough—sure enough! I had only dropped away for a minute, you see. Is the poor thing worse? What is the matter?"

"There is just a breath of life in the child," cried the doctor—"she must have nourishment; something to drive the chill from her heart. I tell you, woman, it does not beat at all; and it seems as if every flutter would be the last."

"Is she asleep?" questioned the good dame, not quite aroused from her slumber. "If she is in a good, sound sleep I would not disturb her; there is nothing like sleep, doctor. Nothing like sleep to bring a person around!" and the good dame sighed as she adjusted her head gear, and cast a longing glance at the chair from which she had been so summarily aroused.

"I do not think she is asleep. It is pure exhaustion that keeps her so still!" said the doctor, and lifting one of the massive silver candlesticks from a table, he moved toward the bed; for though it wanted some hours of dusk, the windows were so muffled that a light in the chamber was necessary. The old housekeeper stole after him, and took the fair hand which lay so like a broken lily on the counterpane, tenderly between her own wrinkled palms.

"See, her eyelids quiver; she is not asleep," said the doctor, as a faint motion like the tremor of a white rose leaf, was just perceptible about the closed eyes of the patient. "Bring me a spoon, she must take some nourishment."

The old housekeeper was now thoroughly awake. With all her quick sympathies and household talents aroused, she poured the spiced wine into a goblet, and with gentle words, motherly and kind enough to have won tears from those soft eyes had there been the warmth of life in them, she strove to persuade the young girl to drink. But a faint motion of the head, which was gently turned away, bespoke that sort of loathing which utter exhaustion sometimes leaves

upon the stomach when any kind of nourishment is presented to it.

"Hand me a spoon," said the doctor, "we must give her strength or she will perish!"

But the good housekeeper was not so willing to give up a kind intention. She brought the spoon, but surrendered the goblet to the doctor, while with gentle violence she forced open the pale lips of the invalid, and poured a few drops of wine into her mouth.

"She is too far gone, she will not swallow it!" cried the doctor, shaking his head sadly.

"She will: she does!" replied the housekeeper, turning eagerly for another spoonful of the generous liquid.

The doctor's face brightened as he saw the housekeeper's assertion confirmed by a faint motion of the snowy throat.

"There, did I not tell you she would live?" cried Dame Weld, and sure enough there came over the coquettish beauty of those marble features a gleam of intelligence—something shadowy and faint, that bespoke the awaking of a soul from the lethargy of death.

"Now," said the doctor, grasping Dame Weld's hand, and shaking it to give emphasis to his whisper: "now if she falls into a slumber, it will not be for eternity; we will watch together, but first let me go forth and see to the other child. Now that she is coming to, it is time for us to think of him."

"I will go with you," said the dame, "the housemaids may want rousing up. They do not know how to watch and wait after a night like the last as we do good Master Warner. Our old eyes are worth fifty younger ones in such cases."

The doctor glanced at the arm-chair by the fire and smiled. But Dame Weld seemed quite oblivious of her own three hours slumber, and followed him out, determined to visit any want of vigilance in the housemaids with her most serious displeasure.

"How, how is the lady?" cried young Lord Bowdon, coming eagerly forward as the worthy pair entered an adjoining chamber. "Does she sleep? Is there hope?"

The doctor smiled, and answered cheerfully.

"Yes, yes, my lord, the poor child was almost dead; another five minutes in the waves would have killed her quite. Indeed I thought that she was gone for a time."

"But now," interrupted the young lord; "now she is out of danger."

"I trust so. Indeed there can be little doubt with quiet, and our good friend here for a nurse," replied the doctor.

"God grant that we may save both these poor children," said the Lord of Bowdon, earnestly. "Come and look at the lad as he sleeps. He is a fine creature, beautiful almost as your other patient, and doing quite well you observe."

The doctor moved across the chamber to the massive crimson bed, upon which a young lad, some fourteen years of age, was lying, very pale it is true, but in a profound slumber. The good leech touched the boy's pulse, and muttering—

"Aye—aye! he will do well enough. I wish the poor maiden were half as certain of her life."

"Doctor, can you see—that is, look at the lad. You have been long with the lady and can judge best; but it seems to me that there is a resemblance, something that bespeaks consanguinity between these two children."

The doctor drew back the damask curtains, and allowed a stream of light to glance across the sleeping boy, while he began to peruse the pale and statue-like features with great interest.

"The same raven hair," he murmured, lifting one of the glossy black ringlets that fell in a mass around the boy's head; and which, freed from the heavy sea water that had saturated it, waved back to its natural curl as it fell from the doctor's hand. "The same white forehead and clearly cut lips. Yes, my lord," he added, turning toward Bowdon, quite satisfied with the examination. "Your guests are of the same blood full surely; brother and sister it may be, for never were features more comely, or more alike. This poor child seems fair and delicate almost as the girl herself. Has he not spoken yet?"

"No, not a word," said Lord Bowdon's valet, to whom the young noble turned, "though he seemed quite conscious after the first hour. He struggled and moaned when we insisted upon taking off his clothes, and seemed almost prompted to break from us and go down to the beach again; but he spoke never a word."

"He must be foreign!" said Bowdon, addressing the doctor. "Indeed his features bespeak that!"

The doctor nodded his head, and fell to perusing the boy's face again, while his own features bespoke a degree of anxious curiosity, which they had not exhibited before that day.

"It is strange," he muttered, gravely shaking his head; "very strange, but, upon my word, I believe the lad is wide awake, though his eyes are closed. Yet he does not seem to heed a word we are saying."

"That may be because he does not understand our language," suggested Lord Bowdon.

"But the sound ought to arouse him: he literally does not seem to hear. Yet I am certain that he is conscious and stronger by half than the poor girl yonder," rejoined the leech.

"It is neither exhaustion nor slumber, that seems quite certain," observed one of Lord Bowdon's guests, after listening to the deep and regular respiration of the boy for a moment. "Try doctor and arouse him; see, there are tears breaking through those lashes, and his lips are getting tremulous. Surely he hears and feels."

"He feels, there is no doubt of that," said Lord Bowdon, as a heavy sob broke from the bosom of the lad, and a tear that had forced itself through those inky and knitted locks, rolled slowly to the pillow.

"Shall I speak to him?" said the doctor, appealing to Lord Bowdon, who nodded his head in assent.

The good leech did speak, but without receiving the slightest notice. The lad still lay, with his cheek turned to the pillow motionless, and it would seem perfectly grief-stricken—for now tear after tear rolled down the rounded surface of his cheek; and his lips

trembled to the sobs that broke through them with every heave of his breath.

"Boy—poor boy, do not weep so; you are with friends; you are safe; try, try and comprehend what we are saying," cried Lord Bowdon.

Still the unhappy child wept on, heedless and inattentive.

Lord Bowdon repeated what he had been saying in French, and then in Italian, hoping that one of these might be his native language—but still the boy wept on, answering nothing by word or sign.

"It may be that he is of Spain," said the young nobleman, turning an anxious look upon the group that surrounded the bed. "I know little of the language, but perhaps enough to make him understand if he is of that country."

And Lord Bowdon uttered a few hesitating and imperfect words of Spanish as he bent over the bed, but with no better effect than had followed the other efforts.

"What can I do?" cried the generous young man; "he seems to understand nothing; how can we comfort him?—how win him from this terrible grief?"

As he spoke, Lord Bowdon took the delicate hand of the lad in his and pressed it, unconsciously somewhat hard. Instantly the boy started to his elbow; his eyes large, and of that deep violet hue, which, with the slightest emotion, becomes so luminous—opened wide, and clasping his hands, he uttered a sound of piteous moaning, which seemed of no language, and yet went to the heart of every one present.

They spake to him kindly, striving to soothe his evident grief and terror in every language which was known to them; but the beautiful boy only looked from one to another, moved his head mournfully, and strove to force back the tears that swam in his eyes, as if he quite comprehended that they wished to comfort him, and was determined not to seem ungrateful. But the effort was in vain, and as if the poor child felt condemned for a want of power over his own grief he closed his eyes, lay back upon the pillow, and many a broken sob bespoke the effort that his young heart was making not to render his distress troublesome. There was something so touching and helpless in all this that it brought tears into other eyes than those of the old housekeeper. But she, good soul, could restrain her sympathy no longer. So, forgetting the usual staid reverence which she usually exhibited in her master's presence, she began to comfort and soothe the lad with a motherly tone, and in warm, hearty English, that would have brought consolation even to one ignorant of the language. But it made no impression on the lad. He had fallen back into his old attitude, and did not seem conscious that she was speaking at all.

"What can we do? Good, wholesome English has no effect upon him; and he does not seem to know the foreign talk of our master any better! Doctor, have you learned nothing at the colleges that will answer? A few scraps of that crabbed Latin now that you sometimes puzzle us with; who knows but that may reach the poor lad's case."

But Doctor Warner, like many another learned man, was far more ready to exhibit his erudition

before those whose ignorance led them to admire unquestionably, than to encounter the criticism of those who could detect the rust into which his knowledge of the classics had fallen.

"My good dame, you forget," he said, with a demure smile that quite covered any internal embarrassment that he experienced. "No feeling man would ever dream of speaking a dead language by a sick bed. You forget—you forget!"

The old dame was quite crest-fallen and bewildered by this reply, and observed, by way of apology, that she did not know before that Latin was a dead language.

"That is unpardonable ignorance, doctor," whispered Lord Bowdon's valet, a shrewd man who had gathered up many a useful fragment of knowledge in foreign travel with his exiled lord. "Surely Dame Weld might know that you have been practising upon it during the last thirty years."

The doctor was very well disposed to give up the subject; so pretending not to hear the whisper, he drew close to the bed, and putting Dame Weld gently aside, spoke in a loud, stern voice to the lad, which made every one in the room start with a feeling of indignant surprise.

Lord Bowdon, always generous and full of impetuous feeling, turned his flashing eyes upon the leech, and parted his lips to reprove a rudeness that seemed so entirely uncalled for; but before he could speak the doctor calmly addressed him.

"It proves, as I suspected, my lord, the poor child is a mute!"

"It must be so," said Lord Bowdon, after a moment, during which he gazed upon the beautiful face of the invalid, which had not changed in the least; though the doctor had spoken in a tone loud and harsh enough to have made every limb of his delicate frame quiver like a reed.

"It must be so, doctor; but it is a painful thing to believe. How very, very beautiful he is, and yet to possess this piteous infirmity. God help the poor lad!"

"What will become of him and of the poor child in yonder!" said the leech, with genuine compassion. "How helpless, how completely alone they are!"

"My lord," said the housekeeper, and her voice trembled with kindly feeling, "since you were a lad like that," and she pointed toward the boy, "we, your old servants, have almost forgotten what childhood is; we are all getting old now—and who knows but God has sent these two young creatures here that we may have something to love and care for. When you are up to the court everything will be lonesome again. The castle is large enough, and its old walls always sheltered the unhappy in your father's time."

"We will talk of this, Dame Weld, some other time," replied Lord Bowdon, gravely, and the blood mounted to his forehead as he observed a meaning smile pass between two of his lordly guests who had withdrawn to a window, and were conversing in a low voice together; "meantime has not the other invalid been left too long alone? Perhaps if we withdraw, this poor boy may sleep!"

The housekeeper only paused to pass her shriveled

with carressing kindness upon the raven curls of the mute before she obeyed her master's hint, and left the chamber, but she soon returned to a neighboring room, through which Lord Bowdon must pass with his guests. As he came out she spoke to him.

"Come in for one moment; come and look at her as she sleeps. It is like watching over an angel, my lord; come and see for yourself, while the doctor is in the steward's room. I think that she is better; but come and see!"

Again the color came into Lord Bowdon's cheek as he encountered the half malicious, half jeering glances of his friends.

"Do you really think that she is in danger? Is she so very ill?" he said, striving to speak unconcernedly, but in a voice that might not reach his guests.

"I don't know that—certainly she is weak as an infant; for a long time we thought she was quite dead; but that is not it, I have not heard her voice yet. What if she too, like the poor creature in yonder, were to prove without hearing or speech?"

"Heaven forbid!" cried Bowdon, almost passionately; "the very doubt is dreadful. My lords I will join you at supper in half an hour," he added, raising his voice, and excited beyond all fear of their comments, he left the room.

"By Jove," said one of the guests, a man beyond middle age, whose influence with the restored monarch, though quietly exerted, was very considerable. "Bowdon seems determined to keep the cage of his sick linnet closed to all but himself! With what an air he bowed us off!"

"True enough," replied the courtier's more youthful companion; "I have not yet been allowed more than a single glimpse of her face. Did you notice that Bowdon would let no one else relieve him for a moment as he carried her up from the rocks, and, under pretence that numbers might be offensive, kept us all from the room, himself included, while Warner and the old dame had the beauty to themselves half the morning."

"But I got a glimpse of her face nevertheless," replied the other, as the two noblemen sauntered arm in arm through the great hall, "though he kept her head nestled in his bosom, and covered with his wet tunic as jealously as a miser hides his gold; the wind was too strong for him once or twice, and I got a fair glimpse of her face. It was beautiful; you never saw anything like it; in spite of fear, and though dripping wet, there was enough loveliness there to strike one dumb."

"That must be more than true if she is at all like the boy, as they all seemed to think," rejoined the other. "A woman like that must be intoxicating—such eyes! Why, man, I have never seen that exact color since the time when we gazed together into the midnight skies of Italy. There is both softness and fire in them at once. I wonder if the girl has eyes of that color?"

"I would stake all chances of Bowdon's favor upon it," was the reply; "the lids were closed when I saw Bowdon's tunic swept away from her face; but, on my life, you could see a violet tinge breaking the transparent snow."

"Blue eyes, and such blue, with hair like midnight. There is novelty in that," said the elder courtier, musingly. "I only hope she is half as handsome as the boy."

"I will soon know that," rejoined the other; and the two noblemen separated. Each as he proceeded with the important duties of the toilet, laid his own schemes for the future, in which that helpless and almost dying girl had become a paramount object.

Meantime Lord Bowdon followed his old housekeeper into the chamber of his guest. He trod very lightly, and held his breath with a sort of reverence as he approached the sleeping girl. There was something so still, so pure, and lovely about the very atmosphere that surrounded a creature so child-like, so helpless, that it overpowered every feeling of his nature that might not have been registered in Heaven.

How beautiful she was, couched upon the snow white linen and glowing velvet of that magnificent old bed! How delicate and helpless she looked with her little snowy hands folded softly over a heart that seemed scarcely to beat; and her tresses flowing down upon her shoulder in a cloud of glossy blackness. There was no color in her face; none upon her lips; she seemed as pure and almost as cold as marble; and yet as if his very gaze, full of pure and holy feeling as it was, possessed a power upon her life. The beating of her heart seemed to grow stronger as he gazed; a color, faint as the red upon a white rose leaf, stole around her mouth; and her fingers lost their clasp upon each other, dropping softly apart as one sometimes sees of the wild flowers separate from each other when the summer wind shakes the stalk. It was like the warm flush of life breaking over a statue, this calm and gradual strengthening of life in the young girl as she slept.

Lord Bowdon stood gazing upon her minute after minute, till his heart became oppressed with its own sweet sensations. He drew a deep breath and turned away, stealing toward the fire with a soft tread. The housekeeper followed him.

"You will not send the poor child away?" she whispered.

Lord Bowdon laid his hand upon the good damo's shoulder, and looked firmly in her face.

"I will do all that an honorable man should do. The helpless shall be protected," he said, with a degree of earnestness that was almost solemn. He was about to add something more, but that instant there arose a bustle outside the chamber. The quick tread of feet, and the expostulations of suppressed voices. Lord Bowdon had scarcely advanced a stride toward the door when it was flung open, and the lad whom he had but so recently left weeping upon his couch, came into the chamber. Part of his damp clothes were huddled on his person; and he bore the appearance of having hurried from his room during the absence of those who were left to watch his slumbers.

The boy cast his eyes wildly around the chamber till they fell upon the bed. Then with a shrill cry that seemed to have broken from his very soul, he darted forward, and casting himself half upon his knees, half upon the couch, with his arms flung passionately to the young creature who lay sleeping there.

She started up, wildly and pale. She put back the hair from her temples with her shivering hands. She kissed his forehead; his cheek; his eyes; and then gathering up a double handful of his tresses, pressed them to her lips with words of tender endearment, murmured in a foreign tongue. Tears flashed down her cheek like rain; the words broke in passionate music from her lips, and falling back upon her pillow, she clasped both hands over her eyes, and absolutely shivered from excess of joy.

The youth too exhibited agitation joyful and intense as her own. His wild and plaintive cry rose now and then with thrilling sharpness above her tender and musical tones. He clung to her, weeping with a sort of joyous wail; while his eyes shone like diamonds.

"My brother—my brother!" cried the girl, removing the hands from over her own eyes, and gazing into his. "Ah, beloved—oh, sweet, dear brother—God has given you back to me, beloved—beloved!"

How sweet was the soft Italian in which these endearing words were uttered. The youth watched her lips through the tears that blinded him, and seemed to understand. He smiled, and dashing aside the tears with his slender fingers, wove them into a thousand elegant forms, that she comprehended rapidly as they were made.

"Together—yes, together. I know—I know it was your arms that bound me to the spar," she cried, aiding her sweet words now and then with a rapid motion of the fingers. "You clung to me in the water—held me close when all sense had left me; but our mother!"

The lad lost all animation in an instant. He stood up, clasped his hands, and dropping them heavily before him, gazed upon the floor. His position spoke all. It was the most perfect expression of hopeless grief. The young girl turned away her head, and, for a time, there was profound silence in the room. At length she held forth her hand, and drew the youth gently toward her.

"She is gone, my brother; we are orphans. Where are we? How came we here?" and she lifted her eyes with a bewildered look to the gorgeous canopy that surrounded her bed.

The sweet language in which she spoke was broken, and aided by signs; but Lord Bowdon understood it, and came forward.

"You are with friends, sweet lady," he said—"friends who will exert themselves to the utmost that you may be safe and happy."

The lad drew close to his sister's pillow, and gazed keenly at the young noble as he spoke; while the fair girl clung to her brother's hand, and turned her eyes from Bowdon to him, as if seeking for an opinion of one in the eyes of the other. For a whole minute the beautiful mute kept his glance fixed upon the noble; then a smile of ineffable sweetness came to his face, and laying the hand of his sister into that of Lord Bowdon, he knelt down and kissed the folds of his tunic.

The warm blood came into Lord Bowdon's cheek, and the tears into his eyes. He laid the young girl's hand reverently on the counterpane, and then pressing his own upon the ringlets of the boy, looked quietly, and with an expression that was almost solemn, into his upturned face.

"God bless him! God bless him!" muttered the housekeeper, who was watching the scene from her station near the fire-place; and any one who had observed Lord Bowdon's noble face at the moment, would have felt, as thoroughly as she did, how honorable and generous was the protection promised to the young creatures who had found shelter beneath his roof.

CHAP. IV.—THE DISCOVERY.

"The slender frame and pallid aspect lay,
As fair a thing as e'er was found of clay." BYRON.

FRANCESCA, GIULO, thus were the orphans named, sat together near the rocks among which they had been wrecked. It was two days after the tempest—that terrible tempest which had left them only each other in the wide world. It was a beautiful morning, calm and bright with the yellow sunshine of a bland autumn day. The sparkling waters of the channel seemed full of light. The rocks around them were tasseled and carpeted with gorgeous autumn flowers. Beyond was the castle, with its imposing turrets and weather-beaten battlements, its mighty old oaks, and its sloping flower garden; above was the blue sky, with a soft golden haze floating over it, and a horizon faintly tinged with rosy purple.

"Ah, it seems like our own dear Italy yonder, where the purple sleeps in the hills, my Guilo," said the maiden, weaving her heart language in the entanglement of her fingers, and gazing first upon him, then upon the distant hills.

Guilo smiled, waved his head sadly, and bent his eyes upon the water with a look that seemed to reproach her for thinking one moment of anything but the mother who had found a grave there.

"Nay," said the lovely girl: "nay, I had not forgotten her while thinking of the land which she loved so, dear Guilo," and she stole her arm around the youth, bending her head to his shoulder.

After this both the orphans remained silent without any attempt at communication, save that which spoke in each others' eyes as they mingled their sorrowful expression together.

After half an hour spent in profound sadness, the two young creatures arose and walked toward the castle. Upon the way they met two gaily dressed cavaliers sauntering idly through the grounds, who paused to gaze upon them as they passed. There was something about the elder of these men that disturbed Francesca greatly. Her large eyes fell beneath his glance, and drawing closer to her brother she walked quickly, and urged by that instinctive feeling of danger which every pure woman feels when she first breathes the same atmosphere with the wily and vicious of the other sex. A like sensation seemed to oppress the youth, but he encountered the bold glance of the courtier with flashing eyes, and a frown that made his child-like and delicate features almost imposing.

The old courtier met it with a quiet smile, and muttered something so low that his companion only caught the words, wild and fresh as a rose bud.

"It will do! It will do!"

As the orphans bent their way to the castle, these two men walked slowly down to the sea-shore, conversing as they went upon indifferent subjects; yet each was occupied by thoughts that had no affinity with the words that were used only to conceal them.

They paused at length in a little cave, where a broad chasm in the rocks allowed the water to flow up some distance into the rugged shore; a rim of discolored foam had been washed to the upper extremity of this cave, which undulated sluggishly with a mass of sea-weed entangled in ragged masses around the foot of the rocks. As the two men stood idly gazing around this isolated spot, one of them uttered an exclamation, and pointed out a heavy object, over which this sea-weed and foam had drifted, but not sufficiently to conceal the outlines of a human form.

"It is a woman—one of those who perished in the storm, no doubt," cried the elder courtier, putting aside a tuft of sea-weed that had floated over the face of the corpse with the point of a stick that he carried. "A beautiful woman, too, she must have been," he added, disengaging his stick, and pointing with it to a cloud of black hair that floated up and down with each wave as it flowed into the cave. "Let us go and call some of the Bowdon people; our host will hardly choose to have the body rest here."

"Had I not better remain to see that it does not float out of the cave again, while you go up to the castle?" said the younger of the two.

"Just as you please, Sir John; I will return presently with help," was the rejoinder, and the next minute Sir John Payton was alone in the cave. As he sat upon a fragment of rock, whose base sloped into the water, a wave heavier than any that had preceded it swept by him, separating the dead body from the entangled rubbish, and heaving it back toward the sea again. But the swell was only sufficient to bear its hurthen to the rock which Sir John occupied, where it was left. A white arm, with a blood red kerchief knotted tightly around it, was dashed almost against his feet. Some heavy substance was evidently secured in the kerchief; for, as the wave subsided, the beautiful limb sunk in the water as if dragged down by an unusual weight.

Influenced by a sudden impulse of curiosity that obviated his natural repugnance to touch the dead, Sir John thrust his hand into the water, and drawing the arm up to the light again, hastily untied the kerchief, and proceeded to examine its contents. It was a scarf of scarlet silk, and, secured in its folds, he found a small casket of red coral, rimmed and clasped with silver. It was locked, and so closely jointed that no water seemed to have penetrated to its contents. But Sir John had no time to examine further, he heard footsteps upon the rock overhead; and, hastily resolving to examine his prize alone, thrust the casket and scarf into his bosom.

Meantime Francesca and her mute brother walked slowly toward the castle. Both were sad; both weary-hearted, but the boy most so, for there was nothing in his heart to soften the terrible bereavement that had fallen upon him in that fatal place.

It was not so with the maiden; for like those blos-

soms that seem to root themselves in the greatest perfection among the graves; love, pure and fervent love, such only as women of passionate impulses and vivid intellect can know, had found birth amid her sorrows and her tears. It was all unknown to herself, and yet the pure love blossom was already trembling into flower with every new pulsation of her heart.

They were sadly moving forward through the labyrinths of an artificial wilderness, that lay between the castle and the shore, when a group of men passed them, bearing the lifeless form which they had just rescued from the water. Guilo saw it—the pale face—the dark hair tangled around that marble throat. A cry, sharp and thrilling with agony, broke from his lips; he sprang forward and fell insensible across the path. Francesca stood motionless; her eyes riveted on the dead: her lips parted in terror and grief.

"My mother—oh, my mother," she cried, in her native tongue, and holding out her clasped hands she added, "oh, stay, stay; wait till his eyes unclose that he may see her once again. She is our mother. She is our mother!"

But those who bore the dead understood no language save their own, and passed on, quite heedless of the anguish they left behind.

CHAP. V.—THE HEART'S MISGIVINGS.

"Love knoweth every form of air,
And every shape of earth." WILLIS.

A MONTH went by. A deep tinge lay upon the trees around Bowdon Castle; a serene beauty slept upon the water, and a brown hue shone richly through the purple that veiled the distant hills. Again Guilo and Francesca sat by the shore, conversing in the voiceless language of the hands. Francesca's cheeks were burning with red, like the heart of a damask rose; and the broad, white lids that drooped over her eyes seemed weighed down by the long and curling lashes that fringed them. With her slender fingers she was weaving the thoughts that lived in her soul that Guilo might read them, but she could not look in the beautiful and anxious face; she dared not encounter the expression of his eyes as he learned the secret that she, his only sister—his world—his very life—had learned to love another. Yet there was nothing angry or passionate in the boy's look. He seemed greatly moved, but with sorrow rather than wrath or jealousy. Had he been prepared for the communication which Francesca made so tremblingly? Had his deprivation of one sense so sharpened others left to him, that all along he had been reading the secrets of that twin heart?

"He loves me, Guilo, as I love him—no, not that! Where on earth is there another heart so full of this exquisite devotion? But he loves me, Guilo!"

"Not as I do," replied Guilo, holding up his hand with a mournful smile; "not as your twin brother loves you; do not expect that, Francesca!"

"Oh, no, not that way—not as you love me, Guilo," answered the young girl, and her eyes flashed beneath their long fringes—"but—but as I love him!"

Guilo was about to answer, and did weave a reply with his hands, for he heard not the footsteps and the

voices that made his sister turn her eyes from him, and hold her breath as she listened.

"What, wed her—wed a nameless creature—a foreigner, tossed up by the waves to his castle steps. Why, Sir John, the thing is impossible; believe me, I know better. Bowdon is bewitched now, I grant you, and it may last for another month—perhaps two—not longer—I tell you not longer!"

"Hush, there she sits with that beautiful mute, her brother. We may be overheard, and Bowdon would not thank us for frightening his bird from the snare."

"Poh, she speaks no English; keep to the native tongue, and we are safe enough. But I will tell you another reason why Lord Bowdon cannot marry this Syren, which I do believe the mermaids have sent to ensnare him from the deep. Another match has been settled for him long ago; old Rowley stipulated for his consent in the matter when the title and estate was given back. It is even suspected that the lady has royal blood in her veins. The king hinted as much in my presence not three months ago."

"Ha, if things stand thus I give up the point; my pretty Italian must take her fate, I suppose. But I would advise Bowdon to get rid of that boy, or he may be troublesome hereafter."

The voices moved away, and Francesca was alone; her cheeks were white now; her lips parted as if the breath that had been held so long was burning painfully. Because she spoke in her own sweet tongue did those heartless men suppose that Francesca had learned no English of her mother—her beautiful, English mother?

Guilo heard nothing, and this time his infirmity was a mercy. Those words had stricken one pure and proud spirit too surely. It was well that the passionate nature of the boy escaped the burning coal that had fallen upon the heart of his sister.

In an appendage to the castle, remote from the main building, occupied by Lord Bowdon and his guests, apartments had been fitted up for Guilo and his twin sister. Luxurious in his own habits, Lord Bowdon delighted in lavishing everything that wealth and taste could accomplish upon these rooms.

"We must give them a home not inferior to that which they have left!" he would say to the good old housekeeper; "we must teach them not to pine for the southern skies, or mourn forever over the parent they have lost. Bowdon must be their world, good dame, and to that end we must make Bowdon beautiful as their own Italy."

And this was accomplished with regard to one nook of the old castle, at least. A stone balcony led up from the garden into Francesca's bower-room. Through a vista in the old oaks that crowded the park, it commanded a view of the most ancient portion of the castle. A wilderness of flowers lay all around, haunted by summer birds, and by the golden bees, that, like cheerful housewives, blend music with their happy toil. From this balcony might be seen grassy slopes, upon which the sunshine lay bright and

golden half the day long; old oaks that as the sun rose high, would fling their great shadows where his beams had slept in the morning, with glimpses of a sky that in sunshine or storm always had beauty for her to admire.

Lord Bowdon seldom intruded into the bower-room of his beautiful *protegee*; and never went there save when the housekeeper was present; but the balcony was neutral ground between the castle and the maiden's bower, and the young noble loved to come there when the morning was freshest, and hear Francesca touch her lute in the open air; and by degrees it had become a habit to steal away from his guests with that degree of haste which was some excuse for a careless toilet, and watch in the balcony till Francesca should come forth from her rest.

On the morning after the conversation which Francesca had heard between two of Lord Bowdon's courtly visitors, he arose very early and went to this balcony, followed by a favorite hound, and with a falcon that he had just purchased, upon his wrist.

"It shall be trained for Guilo," he said, throwing himself upon a stone bench, and beginning to tease the bird with a feather that had been previously plucked from his wing. "Guilo or Francesca! I wonder if she would like the beautiful creature? How beautiful she would look on horseback, dear girl; when my guests are gone, we must strike down a bird or two, if it is only to see if she can join heartily in a good old English sport."

As these pleasant thoughts ran through his brain, Lord Bowdon perched the falcon on his finger, and commenced tormenting him afresh, smiling mischievously as the bird grew angry; and speaking now and then to the old hound that would take an opportunity to lick his hand whenever it came within reach.

As Lord Bowdon was thus tranquilly engaged, the door to Francesca's bower-room was gently opened, and she came forth; but the falcon was clapping his wings with angry violence, and the young noble was unconscious of her presence. She stood a moment leaning against the wall, her hands loosely clasped, and gazing sadly upon the floor. For a moment she remained in this position, then without speaking a word she glided through the open door—closed it without noise, and drew a bolt.

"Oh, Guilo! Guilo! I am very unhappy; my heart is breaking!" she cried, looking around for her brother, who lay upon a pile of cushions near the window, with his eyes closed.

"Better thus—better thus!" she murmured, sinking to a seat and weeping bitterly; "why should he know that which would render him wretched? Oh, Guilo, did you not say that he would not love me as you did? I smiled then; look up, brother, and see if I smile now!"

But Guilo lay motionless and quite unconscious of her grief, and of the heart's misgivings that were torturing her.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 61.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAP. VI.—STRUGGLES.

By a simple grove, 'neath the oak tree bough,
With a stone cross planted near,
The orphan sat, with her pale, cold brow,
And her young heart faint and drear.

Even the presence of her brother became irksome to Francesca: she could not endure the fond and questioning gaze that he fixed, from time to time, on her face. It seemed as if his quick intuition must read at once the doubt, grief, and love that filled her heart. The atmosphere of her bower-room became oppressive, for the luxurious embellishments around her seemed purchased at the price of her own soul.

The nature of Francesca was a singular one: imaginative almost to a visionary extent, and yet with strong perceptions of the right and true which subdued and toned down this intense idealism into the holiest and most beautiful symmetry. She possessed all the fire and passion of genius, but blended with it the sweet trustfulness and devout truth which teaches genius always to exert itself Heavenward.

Hitherto this young girl had been sheltered from the necessity of exertion, by the most tender guardianship of a mother, whose spirit, like a troubled bird, seemed forever on the watch, lest some shadow of the world's evil should fall upon her twins. But the storm had swept over them, literally and metaphorically, and from their trembling hold had been torn away in the rush of the wind, as it were, the only being on earth from whom they could claim love or protection. Was it strange that in this utter desolation the heart of this young creature so full of feeling, so sensitive and faint with the necessities of affection, should have put forth its delicate tendrils, and wound them around the prouder and stronger being who had become a benefactor to her and hers?

But with all her purity—with all her lofty ideas of truth, Francesca had received one legacy from her mother, which was to act with more than due power upon her destiny. The legacy of distrust—self-distrust, which rendered her timid, and a dread of some vague evil which the love of man might bring upon her and hers. Vague it was and shadowy—but with her keen imagination these shadows were constantly changing into strange and unpalpable fears; for like her feelings, the lessons that prompted them had ever been vague, and put forth in mystery. And this, the fault of Francesca's character: a fault which had been so earnestly cherished from her cradle, was

aroused in its full strength by the words of two idle courtiers. The mother of Francesca and Guilo had been wronged and cruelly deceived; with that one black truth looming forever before her heart, she had deemed herself right and wise in striving to guard her daughter's heart from weakness like her own—from a fate like her own.

In the sweet stillness of her Italian home, when the memory of past and present suffering lay upon her spirit, she would seek with sorrowful earnestness to prepare her child to meet and resist temptation in which she had fallen. Yet all this was done quietly, and almost always in the sad eventime, when the children, like little birds in the tree branches, for, like the birds, the lovely twins grew quiet at eventide—they would nestle close to their mother, and become sweetly mournful as she was. But yet of this mother's history the children were profoundly ignorant. They only knew that she had suffered, and that she loved them very, very dearly. How her sorrow had arisen, or where endured, they never thought of questioning. It was something strange and saddening to them, like a cloud in the Heavens which they saw, but never dreamed of asking the wherefore.

Francesca went out into the open grounds, leaving Guilo upon the cushions in her boudoir. Almost for the first time in her life, she was anxious to avoid him. There was fever at her heart, and a keen thirst for solitude, that made the thoughts even of his dear presence irksome. Oh, the first sorrows of the young—how hard they are to endure—how the untamed soul, like an antelope snared by the hunter, with all the wild blood leaping and burning in its veins, struggles and frets beneath the stern bands which life is tightening around it. Poor Francesca, this struggle of a warm heart against the world had just begun with her, and the very earth seemed changed as she trod her way toward the sea-shore.

It was not an aimless walk that Francesca was taking, for in the picturesque grounds that surrounded Bowdon was an old oak, knotted and gnarled with centuries of toil against the storm. Rich was the forest turf beneath it, and where the massive roots had broken through and coiled rudely up into the daylight, a soft green moss crept over them of a more delicate tint than the sward, thus ridging it with what seemed a massive embroidery of velvet, in fine keeping with the rough boughs that rustled and swayed above, tossing about the sunshine and scattering it in flakes before it was allowed to touch the ground.

Beneath this tree was a stone cross, which time had started from its original perpendicular, and would have entirely overthrown but for the roots of the oak which had coiled close up to its base, and girded it firmly to the earth. A wild vine had started among the roots, winding itself in a light wreath around the cross; and a Latin inscription, cut deep in the stone, was now traceable only by the swelling moss that had softly closed up the rugged letters.

It had been Lord Bowdon's wish to place Francesca's mother in the vault where his own ancestors rested. But the orphans had imbibed a love of the open air in that country, where God shelters the poor with a canopy that shames the gilding and glow of her palace domes, and they pleaded piteously that the beloved one might be rescued from the close, stifling vault, and laid to rest where the footsteps of her orphans, and the breath of Heaven might linger around her.

It was a harmless wish, and perhaps Lord Bowdon's own kindly heart echoed it, for with that keen relish of the beautiful which marked all that he did, the old oak was selected to shelter the grave. He placed no monument over it; but the picturesque cross that had cast its shadow on that spot centuries and centuries, now told Francesca where her mother might be found. Naturally as the frightened bird flies back to the empty nest, Francesca sought this place when her heart became so greatly disturbed. She had never been there without Guilo before, and a strange sense of awe crept over her as she entered the great shadow flung by the oak tree. It seemed to her blacker and more dense than she had ever seen it. The sward all around was drenched with dew, and the oak leaves were wet as if a shower had passed over them, but flashing only brighter to the sunshine for the dampness, and rustling to the wind in every fibre, as if the old tree had resolved to cheer the orphan's heart in spite of herself.

It was all in vain; the oak might heave and rustle, and plume its foliage in the sunshine pleasantly as it liked. It might toss its hospitable branches for the birds, and set them off in their blithest songs; but Francesca's heart was with the shadow and the grave. The brightness above was nothing to her. Francesca sat down at the foot of the cross and circled the rough stone with her arm. This closeness to the dead, and to our blessed Saviour's suffering, tranquilized her somewhat, but still only enough to sadden and throw her into a train of mournful thought.

Poor girl, she was cast upon the wide world—what broad desolation there is in these words. She was penniless, helpless, without a known claim upon any human being save the poor mute twined with her in birth and in misfortune. She dared not think of Lord Bowdon as a friend; her mother's lessons had started up in all their potency with the first syllable that aroused her distrust of his motives. True he had been kind, generous, mindful in all things of her maiden delicacy, but she would give these things no weight, or allowed them to operate only against him. Had not two shrewd, and well experienced men—his own friends too—seen in this very delicacy and kindness something deeper than her inexperience had

dreamed of? She was alone now—must act for herself—guard herself against him—against her own heart. It would be a sore trial, she knew, but God would help her. The spirit of the dead would help her—Guilo, too, she had still Guilo to love—but for him—. Here Francesca paused in her thought, a burning blush came over her face, and then she bent that face close to the cross, and began to weep. Ah, this love of kindred, this pride of kindred—it is a blessed, blessed thing, and has kept many a heart pure, which without it might have swerved from the narrow way. Are not all our home affections guardian angels that help, oh, how much to keep the soul within sight of Heaven? Francesca thought of her brother; she remembered the anguish that was in his eyes when she first told him of her love for Lord Bowdon; how would this anguish deepen and burn into frenzy should that love ever become guilt? The thought made her shudder as if the cold stone against which her forehead leaned had chilled her to the heart.

Still Francesca was helpless. She could settle upon no plan, nor decide how to act. A stranger in a strange land, she sat by her mother's grave, and that was all the home she could claim from any creature on earth. She remained more than an hour leaning against the cross, and almost expecting that some low whisper from the grave would teach her how to act. But the soft stir of the oak leaves was all the sound that reached her, and that was so sweet, so calm, that instead of instructing her what course she might best take to avoid the evil she dreaded, it only brought imperceptible tranquillity to her heart, and awoke there a doubt if the suspicions that had tortured her so much might not be without just foundation.

Francesca was naturally frank, and she knew literally nothing of the conventionalities of life. She resolved to see Lord Bowdon, to look in his eyes and question him of those things that had so troubled her. "I will ask him," she said—"I will ask him if this thing be true. If he is indeed pledged to another while he pleads with me in every question, every look, to return his love. I know that he loves me, and yet, and yet—"

She paused in the open path, for when the first idea of speaking to Bowdon struck her she had left the stone cross, and was walking quickly toward the castle. But now she stopped in the path motionless; Lord Bowdon had never *in words* desired her love, or rendered up his own. Their hearts, their eyes had talked together, and scarcely on any other subject—but their lips never. She remembered, now, that a sad and thoughtful expression would often cloud Lord Bowdon's eye when hers looked into it, full of the love-light that she could no more prevent breaking up from her heart than the star can smother its brightest beams.

Francesca walked forward more slowly as these thoughts dawned upon her mind, and, without being conscious of it, turned aside into a labyrinth of the garden, which had grown up during its lord's absence almost into a wilderness. She was threading her way through the tangled autumn flowers, when a winding of the path led her face to face with the elder of Lord Bowdon's guests, the very man who had unconsciously

informed her how precarious was her position at the castle.

The nobleman seemed a good deal surprised by her sudden appearance. His position in the path, choked up as it was with an overgrowth of shrubs, compelled her to pause. He did not step aside, but stood gazing upon her with a degree of scrutiny that was just saved from rudeness by a respectful and bland expression of countenance, that seemed to ask pardon for the offence his eyes persisted in.

Francesca was greatly annoyed by this. The blood mounted to her forehead, and she turned to retrace her steps.

"By Heavens, that air of pretty pride is enchanting," he muttered. "As if the girl read her destiny in my eyes, she begins to queen it already!"

Francesca did not distinctly hear the words, but she turned and said in her sweet, broken English—

"My lord, I have once before heard you speak your own tongue, thinking that I knew only Italian; but I can understand when you speak English very well!"

"So this is another secret that Lord Bowdon has kept from us!" said the noble, coloring. "Well, well, my pretty maiden, if we can understand each other in English so much the better. But tell me how long your fancy will hold for this somewhat gloomy old castle?"

Francesca involuntarily lifted her eyes to the noble pile that loomed between her and the sky—oh, how beautiful, how dear it was to her!

The nobleman read the feeling in her face.

"It is a grand old pile enough," he said; "but beauty such as I gaze upon, sweet one, was intended for palaces."

"I have no other home: I wish for no other home!" said Francesca, and her eyes filled with tears, for she thought how short a time might elapse before that would be her home no longer.

"That is because you have not been at court, where beauty like yours is worshipped as it should be."

"I did once expect to see the court," said Francesca, sadly, for his words had aroused mournful thoughts. "I believe my poor mother was going to London, and I suppose your king is there."

"Yes, the king is there, with many a handsome cavalier; besides stately dames who hold these cavaliers in secret slavery; but among them all, my princess, you would stand unrivalled. Nothing so bright has appeared before Charles since he came back from foreign parts."

Francesca did not seem to understand him; her eyes had sunk to the ground, and she fell into deep thought even while he was speaking of her beauty, a theme which youth loves so well.

"And is this London a very large place?" she said, at last, with a sort of child-like anxiety.

"Very large, my beauty."

Again the young girl mused; and when she looked up her cheek had the hue of a ripe peach upon it.

"And are the people fond of music as they are in Italy?"

The old noble smiled, and looked somewhat puzzled; he wondered greatly what thoughts had given rise to the question.

"Why not?—perhaps as they are in Italy; but yet the king has his own foreign bard; and so has our good lady, the queen!"

"But the people—the people?"

"Ah, they too have some rude ideas of sound; but nothing that you would deem much of."

Francesca looked disappointed; and with his searching glance the courtier read very nearly the thoughts that were passing through her mind.

"Music, music," he said, "is for the court; there all have the taste and cultivation necessary to the love of sweet sounds. Ah, you should see our lady, the queen, when some songster from her own land is allowed to enter the presence; and the king—it was but a few weeks since that I heard him say to Lord Bowdon, our young host here, that his honeymoon must certainly be spent at the court; 'for I have received information,' said he, 'that the lady to whom you are betrothed sings like a nightingale, and we sadly want some new warbler!'"

A covert smile stole across the nobleman's lip as he watched the effect of his words. Tint by tint he saw the peach-like bloom fade away from her cheek, till she stood before him drooping and pale like a lily when its stalk is roughly bent.

"My lord I sing a little; would you like to hear me sing?" said Francesca, after standing before him more than a minute stricken with grief. Without waiting for a reply she clasped her hands, parted her tremulous lips, and, after a few broken attempts, poured forth the wild burden of a melody so sweet, so plaintive, that it thrilled even the cold heart of the noble with feelings to which he had been little used. He was astonished too, for the young creature's voice surpassed anything he had ever heard in sweetness and compass. The low notes flowing like the liquid fall of water drops, silvery and faint from her lips, and the whole sweet burden of her voice gushing out wild and clear, like the song of a nightingale when half buried in dewy roses. There was exquisite nature, and no little cultivation in all this. The old noble stood before the child fascinated and surprised out of his usual self-possession. But scarcely was the song half finished when the young creature's voice faltered: a note or two quivered on her lips fainter—fainter, and clasping both hands passionately over her heart, she bent her head low, while tears dropped like rain from her eyes.

"Can I sing?" she said; "will this win bread for my brother when—when," her voice broke in a sob, and the tears fell from her eyes in large, heavy drops.

The old courtier was touched by her simplicity and her grief. For a single moment—and that was much for him to give from a selfish life—his sympathies were honorably aroused.

"We will talk of this another time, poor child," he said, attempting to take her hand, but she held it firmly against her heart, that he could see fluttering and swelling against the delicate fingers like a bird struggling in its cage. "But some one is coming, cheer up, child, there is no cause for all these tears. Talent, youth, and beauty, what more can a woman desire?—all these are yours, sweet one. Their value may be taught you hereafter. Stop weeping—stop

weeping—never let tears drop from those eyes: one or two just floating on the blue surface like dew on a violet, is rather becoming. But do not drown them thus!" The old noble broke off hastily, and turned back in the path, muttering—"she will learn these things—she will learn! How the creature sings—how full of feeling she is—oh! ha, my Lord Bowdon, I just met your protegee trying to find her way through the wilderness here; by my honor, it is refreshing to gaze on so much loveliness in this rural spot."

Lord Bowdon, who was coming down the path, paused for an instant, glanced eagerly around, and then with brightened color and an air of annoyance, allowed the old courtier to stop his progress.

"Francesca—is it Francesca or her brother whom you have met?" he said, in a hurried manner.

"Oh, the young lady, of course, I am too warm an admirer of the sex to waste admiration on boys. You ought to have known that: but I do assure you, my lord—and I have been considered no bad judge of female beauty in my time—this young girl surpasses anything I ever saw; she would drive half the court mad in a week."

"I hope Francesca will never see the court," said Lord Bowdon, and his color rose. "She will never desire it, I am certain; she seems content enough here, and Bowdon is world enough for the poor children!"

"Yes, just now it does seem pleasant enough!" replied the noble, with a meaning smile; "but these dreams do not last forever. When a Lady Bowdon comes to the castle, this world may prove rather narrow for them both."

Lord Bowdon became very pale; and his eyes fell beneath the half jeering glance of his companion. He turned and walked on with his guest in silence. These words of the old noble had made him thoughtful; they forced him to reflect upon a subject that he would gladly have evaded even when conversing with his own heart.

"Have you ever seen that young creature in tears? But of course you have," said the noble, starting Bowdon most unpleasantly from his abstraction. "Upon my word, when I saw her just now the effect of her beauty was absolutely startling; it would have brought even Rowley to his knees, though he is not over fond of lachrymose beauty."

"In tears! Francesca alone in the wilderness, and in tears. Surely, my lord, you must be mistaken—she seems of late to have recovered entirely from the shock of that storm and her poor mother's death."

"Perhaps—but never mind, my lord, the sex, you know, are like violets drooping with dew one minute and laughing to the sunshine the next. I dare say she is under some rose-bush singing like a nightingale by this time—ha, you are going to seek her—very well, but do not keep us waiting. You know we are to try the new falcons this morning!"

"I will be with you in time!" replied Bowdon, and he hurried away, looking anxiously around for Francesca at each new turn of the path. But she was no where to be found, and after a fruitless search among the thickets, he joined the hawking party which was now mustering at the castle, mentally resolving to

seek the young girl in her tower-room, and learn the cause of her grief before he slept.

It was late when the hawking party returned, and Lord Bowdon found it impossible to leave his guests till long after nightfall, and at that hour to force himself upon the privacy which he had ever held in almost religious respect was impossible.

CHAP. VII.—DEPARTURE.

"The world was all before them where to choose."
MILTON.

LORD BOWDON'S sleeping room was in a wing of the castle that approached nearest to the apartments that had been assigned to the orphans, and which, as we have said, were detached from the main building. We will not stop to analyze the feelings that induced the young noble to spend some moments each night before retiring by the tall window, from which a view of them might be obtained. On that night he stood longer than usual by the sash gazing upon the faint light that could just be seen flickering through the foliage that hid the window of Francesca's chamber. A strange, heavy feeling was at his heart, as if some great calamity were about to befall him and her. It had hung about him all day, and now in the hush of night the depression became painful.

As he stood thinking of the singular destiny that had cast these two children upon his threshold, he saw, or thought he saw in the distance, a white figure moving about in the balcony. His heart leaped—"could it be Francesca?—was she wakeful like himself? Had some coming event cast its shadow on her likewise that she could not sleep?"

As these questions ran through his mind he saw the figure move away; next it was in the shrubbery; again he saw it crossing the flower garden, and each time it came nearer and nearer to himself.

It was a calm, starlight evening, and as the object came toward him, fluttering in and out of sight like some snow white bird driven from its nest, he stepped through the window to a stone gallery that ran beneath, and there shrouded in shadow, waited with a beating heart to learn who or what this night wanderer could be.

There was a smooth bit of lawn beneath the window. The figure came somewhat rapidly up to this point, but seemed to falter and hesitate about leaving the thicket and clearly braving the starlight. But after a minute it came forth, hesitating in every step, and evidently filled with apprehension. The starlight was full and clear. There was nothing to break it from the approaching form; and now Lord Bowdon became certain that it was Francesca. She moved toward a slender tree that stood alone near the gallery on which he stood, and, leaning against its trunk, stood motionless as a statue, gazing upon the window through which Lord Bowdon had just passed. A curtain of thick crimson velvet fell over the sash, and nothing could be seen from within save a gleam of light here and there like wine stains dashing the rich fabric. Still even in this common place object there seemed to be enough to rivet the attention of the young creature who stood so immovable, and quietly gazing upon it.

Lord Bowdon leaned gently over the railing of the gallery till the slanting starlight fell upon his features.

"Francesca!"

A faint cry from under the tree followed the utterance of this name, and then all was still again. But the foliage of the sapling quivered far more than the balmy air warranted; and in the pale light Bowdon could see that Francesca was clinging to it for support.

"Francesca." He leaped over the railing and went up to where the young creature stood. Excited and anxious, for the starlight rendered her face supernaturally pale; and even in the serene darkness he could discover that her features were troubled.

"Why are you here, Francesca, sweet child?—why are you up so late? See you not how heavily the dew has fallen? These garments are damp with it already; and your hand, Francesca, you are ill! Your hand is burning, and yet you shiver with cold. Go in, child—go in, this night air must kill you!"

"I am not cold; I do not suffer!" said Francesca, in a low voice; "but I will go in as you say. This air seems heavy; I can hardly breathe. Good night!" and she turned away.

Lord Bowdon still held the hand he had taken, and gently drew it to his arm.

"This is a quiet place, Francesca; but you had better not walk forth after nightfall, especially without your brother. While my guests are here, with all their followers, there may be danger in it. Where is Guilo?"

"At rest—he can sleep," and the anguish at Francesca's heart broke forth in her voice.

"And you, my child, why is it that you cannot sleep like Guilo?"

Francesca did not answer, but hurried her pace; and Lord Bowdon could feel that she trembled from head to foot.

"Francesca will you not speak to me?"

"I have been thinking," said the poor girl, "and thought makes me wretched now!"

"Poor child, you have been too much alone; it is of your lost mother that you have been thinking!"

Francesca began to sob.

"Has anything happened to awake your grief? I hoped that its first poignancy was over! You must not go to—to—that old oak so often."

"I shall never——" she checked herself, choked back a sob, and added—"I shall seldom go there again."

"That is right if it makes you so sad. Come, come, I must see you cheerful before we part; we are almost at the balcony of your room, and you have been weeping all the way; when we come where the light is I must have a smile."

"I shall never—never smile again!" cried the poor girl, yielding to the passion of her grief.

"Francesca this is strange—it is wrong—it is ungrateful to Providence," said Bowdon, pausing in his walk, and gazing earnestly upon her.

"It is ungrateful to you my—my benefactor," cried the strange girl, snatching his hand and kissing it wildly, while the tears fell thick and fast upon it.

Lord Bowdon threw his arm gently around her,

for he saw that she stood unsteady, and drew her forward.

"Sit down with me a moment; sit down here in the balcony—there is something more in this than you have told. I remember now Lord Rochley spoke of meeting you in the garden, and he said that you were grieving about something. Did you speak with him?"

"If that tall gentleman with the riband and jewels is Lord Rochley, he did speak with me," answered Francesca, sinking upon the stone seat—for they had reached the balcony, and she leaned her pale head against a pillar.

"And what did he say? Something very foolish and wrong in praise of your beauty, I dare answer," and Lord Bowdon spoke with considerable displeasure in his tone.

"No," gasped Francesca, for she felt—oh, how drearily—that her fate hung upon the next words. "He told me that you were about to visit the court—that in a short time you would be married to some great lady."

It was Lord Bowdon's turn to start—had the light been strong enough Francesca could have seen that his face was pale as her own. For perhaps two minutes both remained silent; it did not seem as if either dared to draw a deep breath.

"Is it true?" said Francesca, lifting her pale face in the starlight; "tell me if it is true!"

"Was it this that troubled you?—that drove you forth into the night? If so God help you!—God help us both!"

"God will help us!" said Francesca, with gentle solemnity, and, sinking upon her knees, she pressed Lord Bowdon's hand to her lips; how his tall frame shook, how his hand trembled to the pressure of that kiss which only fell upon it, light as the flutter of a damp rose leaf.

"Francesca, I will see you again; I cannot talk on this subject now; you are in no state to listen if I could. To-morrow we shall both be more composed."

"To-morrow, to-morrow," repeated the young girl, rising to her feet—there was the most profound despondency in her voice; her face drooped upon her bosom, and without another word she glided from the balcony.

Lord Bowdon's first impulse was to follow her, but he controlled the wish, and after pacing the balcony for a long time in great agitation, returned to his apartment.

Francesca sat trembling by the door all the time that Lord Bowdon's perturbed footsteps sounded from the balcony. When he descended the steps and turned into the shrubbery, she could restrain the keen desire to see him again no longer; but, stole out like a spirit, and leaning against the stonework, gazed after him with a sinking heart that seemed absolutely to forget its pulsations. When he disappeared she turned away; her forehead was damp, and a faintness like that of death stole over her limbs. She crept back to the boudoir and sat down by the cushions where her brother had flung himself, for he always refused to seek his own apartment so long as Francesca remained in her boudoir.

The lad was in a sound sleep: very quiet was his

glumber; but as the silver lamp that swung from the ceiling overhead threw its beams upon his face, Francesca could see that it wore a look of distress, as if some trouble lay at his heart, forced back and never spoken of. No sound could awaken Guilo; but Francesca knew how to arouse him with her kisses. She bent down and touched his cheek. Guilo started up and sat upon the cushions, casting wild and bewildered glances at his sister. She lifted her right hand and made a few rapid motions with the fingers. Quick as lightning the boy's face lighted up; his eyes kindled; his lips trembled with smiles; his fingers flashed in and out with indescribable rapidity. The idea which her little hand had conveyed seemed to fill him with delight; and his great violet eyes said as firmly as words could have said—"my lost sister has come back. She is mine again; no stranger's love divides us now!"

But upon Francesca's brow there was a look of keen anxiety. Her resolution was taken—she had ceased to struggle, and now came the time for exertion.

The expression of her countenance made Guilo sad again; he seemed pondering within himself to find some cause for her trouble other than that which he did not wish to believe—all at once an idea struck him. He threw off his tunic, and unbinding a scarf of silk that girded his under garments, took out twenty broad pieces of gold. The scarf had been tied about his person upon the wreck; for his poor mother had prudently divided her little hoard, hoping that some portion might reach the shore.

Francesca was ignorant of this; but it removed one sharp care from her bosom. She took the gold and kissed Guilo, murmuring grateful words to Heaven.

Lord Bowdon had ordered dresses to be sent down from London for his orphan guests; part were English in their fashion, the rest Italian. Some unacknowledged feeling had induced Francesca to adopt the English garments, but now she cast them off and put on the costume of her own land. She tied a change of dress for herself and Guilo in two small bundles, and giving one to him put the other by her side. Then the twins sat down together as if a terror had seized them when the moment arrived which was to cast them forth upon the world. The lamp was burning dimly. The boudoir grew dark with shadows—shadows that made Francesca and Guilo creep closer together. Thus hour after hour went by till these two children were startled by a gleam of light, cold and grey, which told them it was morning.

Francesca arose, took up her bundle and a lute that Lord Bowdon had given her.

"We shall need it to win bread for us," she murmured, with a faint sigh, and looking at Guilo as if he might disapprove the act, and could hear her apology for it.

Hand in hand these two young creatures went forth into the cold grey of the morning. The light was dim; they could only see each others faces as through a fog. The dews around them lay heavy as rain; the foliage around had not yet flung off the black shadows of night. The two children sped on through the fog, through the dripping thickets. They crouched a moment, wet and trembling, by the foot of that old stone cross; they left a few flowers gathered hastily in the gloom as they went along upon the grave. Then Francesca and Guilo arose and went away.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 117.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER VIII.

All desolate and sad they wander'd on,
Without a home beneath the broad, blue sky,
Their young hearts weary, and their hope all gone,
Like two bright seraphs driven from Paradise.

NEAR a cross road, upon the rising grounds that lie about Richmond, sat two travellers close together, and sheltered from the sun by a hawthorn hedge now sheathed with those white blossoms that seemed like perfumed snow-flakes that winter had left among the trees. The foreign costume in which the difference between male and female was less rigidly defined than is usual in England—the delicate features, and above all the half shy, half mournful air that hung around these two young creatures, might well render them objects of curious attention to the few persons that were passing on the Richmond road at that early hour. The two strangers were conversing together, but not in words. Though the expression on each face—the rapid change—the wild sort of sparkle that came and went in their violet eyes, spoke more eloquently than mere language could have done.

"Francesca you are ill. The sight of this great city frightens you," said the boy, in those mute signs with which he could alone communicate ideas. "There is a brook down yonder, wait while I get some water for you, my poor sister."

Francesca, the pale, weary Francesca, thanked him with her eyes; and bending down a branch of the hawthorn to shelter her from the sunbeams, Guilo ran for the water.

The old tree beneath which he had heard the water gurgling up as if forcing its way to the sunshine with a struggle, stood near the road and upon a sloping hill-side. Guilo had taken a little wooden cup from his bundle, and with this he sought the old tree. The sward all around it was vivid with moisture, and matted with such wild flowers as grow brightest where a spring has its source. Guilo knelt down on a root of the old tree, and parting the cowslips and violets that tangled their golden and purple flowers over the mouth of the spring, dipped his cup into the little basin.

"Ah, how bright it is; this will do her good," he thought, holding up the primitive goblet, and smiling to see the cool drops roll over its brim, and fall to the violets which his feet were crushing. "This will remind her of our little marble spring beneath the

orange trees in our mother's garden! After all, many beautiful things may be found in this strange, cold England. Oh, yes, I will do it, and that will make her smile," the boy's eyes sparkled with some bright idea as he sat the wooden cup down, and began with great eagerness to gather wild blossoms from the turf, which he tied dexterously together with blades of the young grass, and laid in a wreath around the brim; "blue, golden and white, oh, see how the pretty buds dip down to kiss the drops," thought the lad, as he walked slowly from the spring, settling the little garland around his wooden goblet.

That instant there came up the hill one of those huge and gorgeously ornamented carriages known about the court, but which were not common enough to pass the highway without exciting great curiosity among the populace, for very few that were not among the highest in the land could afford the ponderous splendor of the vehicles then in use.

This carriage was drawn by four white horses, in harnesses of scarlet leather, whose gilded steeds rattled and glanced in the sunshine as they came bounding forward at a pace which threatened danger to any person who chanced to be within their course. Still there was little danger, the noise made by the harnesses, the rattling wheels, and the cracking of a long, silken whip-lash that flashed and curled around the snowy coats of the horses like a hissing serpent, were enough to alarm any one in the road for many rods ahead. But that noise increased tenfold would have failed to penetrate the sealed ears of poor Guilo. All unconscious of danger, he was moving slowly along, directly in the horses' path, and arranging with a well-pleased smile the little garland of flowers upon his cup.

The coachman saw the lad and shouted, but without checking his horses till they were almost upon the unconscious stranger; and their hot breath floating over his shoulder. Then he drew them up with a violence that sent the carriage rolling some yards down the hill, where the wheels, protruding far behind the body, struck a fragment of rock. This gave a violent shock to the vehicle, and the galled animals snorted and struggled for a foothold on the hard and steep road, completed the confusion. Shrieks broke from the carriage. The door was flung open, and a lady, whose haughty eye and damask cheek seemed only to brighten with danger, leaned out, and flinging up her white hand with an imperative gesture, called to know what had frightened the horses.

"It is a boy—an obstinate young varlet, who deserves to be trampled down. I shouted half a dozen times, and there he stands yet!" cried the coachman, giving his whip a flourish that sent the lash curling within an inch of Guilo's cheek.

"Stop, stop, do not touch him!—oh, how beautiful—how very beautiful the creature is!" cried the lady, leaning further from the carriage, and bending her dark eyes on the lad in an ecstasy of admiration. "Keep the horses quiet—keep them quiet—do you hear? or they will hurt him—send the lad hither!"

"Do you not hear, sirrah? My lady would speak with you!" shouted the man, striving to restrain the spirited animals that still kept prancing and plunging beneath the strength of his arm.

But Guilo heard nothing: he still bent over the wooden drinking cup with that calm, sweet smile hovering about his mouth; and his beautiful head turned a little on one side, regarding a now turn that he had just given to the wreath.

"Impudent young varlet," muttered the coachman, with difficulty restraining his whip hand.

"What a singular creature!" exclaimed the lady; "what eyes—what an attitude—how calm he stands in all this storm of noise! Will some one bring that youth to the carriage door?" she added, waving her hand to a group of intruders that came galloping up the hill, and drew up around the carriage, increasing the noise and the brilliant confusion by the tramp of their horses, and the flash of their scarlet garments.

"Will some one bring that lad hither?"

One of the horsemen instantly rode up to Guilo and touched his shoulder.

The boy started, looked up with the smile still around his lips, and a glow of pleasant wonder on his face. The gentleman spoke to him, but saw by the expression of his features that he was not understood; his foreign costume also aided the idea that he was of some other land and language. So pointing to the open carriage, the outrider indicated to the boy that some one wished to see him.

Bewildered by the tumult and splendor that had gathered unseen around him, Guilo turned back and went close to the carriage door, from which the lady was still bending.

"Why, child, were you crazed thus to stand in the highway, and we driving at such speed?" cried the lady, as the large, bright eyes of Guilo were lifted to her face; "a minute more and you might have been trampled to death."

Still Guilo looked in smiling bewilderment upon beauty of a kind that he had seldom, if ever seen before, brilliant and overpowering, but how unlike that of his own sweet sister.

"What have you here, a broken cup; and, by my life, garlanded with violets as if a fairy had done it," cried the lady, more and more enchanted with the features which had struck her so forcibly at a distance, and by the picturesque grace of Guilo's whole appearance; "oh, what a pity, the beautiful creature speaks no English!"

Guilo saw the lady's eyes wander from his face to the drinking cup, and imagining that perhaps she desired a draught of the water, was about to hold it

up—but that instant his eyes fell upon another person who occupied a seat in the carriage, and who frightened by the shock that had broken the vehicle, leaned back upon the azure cushions, pale and trembling. Instantly forgetting the proud beauty who bent over him with an air caressing, and yet full of oppressive condescension, Guilo caught hold of the open door, and drawing himself up till he rested with one knee in the carriage, held his goblet toward the lady whose terror had been so completely overlooked. Poor Guilo had no power of speech, but there was a world of gentle sympathy in his features as he lifted them to the pale lady, and with his eyes asked her to drink.

Catharine of Brognza—for it was the queen of England to whom Guilo had offered his cup of cold water—reached forth her hand, and taking the little goblet lifted it unsteadily to her mouth. Her large, dark eyes that had been half closed till now opened, and she bent them upon the kneeling boy with a warm look of touching gratitude, that made the young heart thrill in his bosom.

When Catharine withdrew the cup, Guilo saw that her lips trembled, and that her eyes were overcharged with tears. All unconscious of her rank, and only feeling in his heart that there was trouble beneath the look of patient sadness that lay upon her face, the boy unwound his little garland and laid it, sparkling with water-drops, upon the queen's lap; and with a hand upon his heart and uplifted eyes, besought her to receive it.

A blush and a bright smile lighted up the queen's face, and then it seemed very beautiful to Guilo—more beautiful than the brilliant woman from which he had just turned—for very pure and very deep feelings broke out in that smile and blush. The spirit of beauty was there, and in the other was only the coarse, earthly substance.

Catharine took up the pretty garland sparkling and wet as it was, and after inhaling its fragrance an instant, began to search among the ornaments of her dress for some jewel with which she might reward the youth. A little golden bird with diamond eyes, and its spread wings fringed with various colored gems, fastened the point lace upon her bosom, and this she disengaged.

"Here, my child," she said, in her sweet, broken English, attempting to place the ornament in his hand. "You seem a stranger: and—and—" she was about to add that she too was a stranger, but misdoubting their propriety the words were instantly checked, and a tear only betrayed what their import might have been.

Guilo put the jewel away, and shaking his head drew back, letting himself gently to the ground. Then he encountered the face of the lady who had first addressed him, and was startled by the change that had come over it. A frown lay upon the haughty forehead; fire flashed in the dark eyes; the vermilion lips were curled with an angry smile; and passions of the worst kind rendered her beauty almost repulsive. Guilo turned his eyes from her to the queen, who seemed troubled by the storm of passions that his impulsive homage to herself had called into action; and yet in the expression of her face was something of femal-

triumph. "A single gleam, feminine and modest, that might have told to one who understood those things, how sweet was the gratification to have, even for a little moment, triumphed over the insolent freak of a rival."

But Guilo only saw that one of those ladies was very angry, and that the other could hardly suppress a tumult of feeling which that anger had excited. He had no idea of the rank which these two females held, and so having acted his part drow back, and with his bytes bent upon the earth, waited for the carriage to pass on.

Some little time passed before the equipage could be put in motion, and when all was ready, the Countess of Castlemain—for by this title of infamy was the bold woman who had first summoned Guilo, known at court—created further delay by calling one of the outriders to her side, and whispering some directions to him in a cautious manner, as if they were not intended for the queen's ear.

A flush came across Catharine's forehead; and speaking somewhat sharply to the outrider, she requested him to move away that the carriage might pass on.

"Oh! certainly," said Lady Castlemain, drawing back with a smothering smile, and folding her arms as she sank against the cushions of her seat. "I had forgotten that his majesty is waiting—and no one understands better than I do how impatient he always is for the presence of his royal bride!"

The savoring tone; the cruel triumph conveyed in this speech had its full effect upon Catharine. She turned very pale; and fire sparkled through the tears that Guilo's sympathy had brought to her eyes. But, without speaking, she waved her hand to the outriders: her order was repeated, and the royal equipage swept over the hill, leaving Guilo alone by the way side.

Pondering over that which he had seen, this gentle lad walked slowly toward the hedge where his sister still sat. She had been aroused from a dreary reverie by the passing carriage, and shrinking close to the hedge, watched it go by with a beating heart, for with her excited nerves everything filled her with apprehension. After a little she saw Guilo coming toward her very slowly, with his eyes fixed upon the drinking cup which he carried. All at once he started from a fit of abstraction into which he had fallen, and casting a sharp look up the hill, came hastily toward her. Before Francesca could frame the questions that rose uppermost in her mind, a horseman came galloping toward them, whom she instantly recognized as one of the gentlemen who had followed the carriage.

"Nay, my fine lad," he said, reigning in his horse, and riding more deliberately as he came toward Guilo, who looked anxiously at his sister, fearful that the strange horseman might terrify her. "And so you are here yet; be quick, and tell me if you understand English?"

Guilo did not answer.

"Well, well, I can manage French enough to make you understand!" he muttered, and again the question was put somewhat imperfectly in the language which he supposed familiar to the strange youth.

Still Guilo was silent: and his eyes turned anxiously from the cavalier to his sister, who, half starting up, stood sheltered by the hedge; her large eyes filled with affright, like a fawn hunted to its thicket. Through the flowing branches that sheltered her she had seen the horseman, and recognized him at once. It was the old noble whom she had met at Bowdon Castle. Guilo, too, that moment detected the identity of this man with his old acquaintance, and the discovery sent the color to and fro like lightning on his face. But in a strange dress, and thus sunburnt and travel-worn, the noble did not at first detect the orphan-mute whom he had seen much less frequently than his sister. It was not till the anxious glances that Guilo cast toward her place of concealment, had drawn his notice that way, that the truth flashed upon him.

"What ho! my runaway mute: and, and—aye, by my faith, the little shipwrecked beauty with him!" he exclaimed, with a look of well pleased surprise, riding a pace forward, and wheeling his horse that he might gain a fair view of the young girl. "Now this is a fortunate miracle indeed. While Bowdon is searching half over England for the pretty creatures, here I find them nestled like two birds in a hedge, half way between London and Hampton court."

Francesca came forward. With a flush upon her before pale features, she forced herself by Guilo. The old noble dismounted, and slipping his arm through the embossed bridle with which he commanded the movement of his horse, regarded them both more earnestly than he had hitherto done. Their worn garments: the two little bundles lying on the grass, all poverty-stricken and almost ragged, fixed his attention if they failed to excite much sympathy.

"Tell me," he said, gently taking Francesca's hand: "tell me where you have been these winter months? How came you hither?"

"We have been," answered Francesca, "wandering about I do not know where, but always in this old country."

"And have you had no settled home?" inquired the courtier, now really touched by her tone of meek desolation.

"Yes," said the girl, "we stayed two entire months with a good widow, who would not let us travel when the winter was coldest; she was very kind to Guilo!"

"And then?"

"Then," replied Francesca, "we started for London again; but often lost the way, and so it took us a long time!"

"And how did you live?" questioned the noble, deeply interested.

"Oh! we had no money at first, and when that was gone—" Francesca broke off, and pointed, with a mournful smile, to that lay by her bundle muffled from the damp in a shawl which the poor girl had taken from her own person. That smile told more plainly than words how miserable had been the support that her exquisite talent had won from the country people.

"Poor child, and was that all?" exclaimed the noble, passing his hand over her tresses with an impulse of compassion that all his worldliness could not quite subdue. "You must have suffered!"

"Oh! I did not mind that," said Francesca, and her eyes filled; "but Guilo, poor Guilo, he would eat nothing at all when there was not enough for us both, and that broke my heart. See how thin he is, my poor, poor Guilo!—while I am so strong!"

Strong!—generous Francesca, how mournfully that delicate frame belied the assertion. How full of solitude, and of meekly endured want was those eyes, enlarged far beyond their natural size, and around which the black lashes seemed to have grown longer and thicker from the tears that had washed them!

"Indeed you both look tired and thin," said the noble, turning his eyes from one sweet face to the other; "I only wonder that either of you is alive; but now—where are you going now?"

"To London. Is not that great cloud of smoke there London?" said Francesca.

"It is! But whom do you know in London?"

Francesca shook her head, and tears started to her eyes again.

"We are strangers to everybody," she said.

"And what will you do?"

"You told me once," said the young girl, timidly, "that in London are people who love music; will they not give me a little bread every day, and a place to sleep in at night for Guilo and myself? We shall not want much; and I can sing better now than I could when you heard me. Every day I have looked up to Heaven; and my mother, who is there, has taught me so much. My very heart trembles sometimes with its sweet efforts when I sing to her in the moonlight; for then Guilo looks at me as if he could hear, and knew that our mother listened also."

Francesca looked anxiously at the old peer as she finished speaking. His eyes were bent on the grass; and he had fallen into a deep reverie, as if the sound of her voice had aroused painful reminiscences in his mind. At length he looked up with an expression of more profound feeling than he had yet displayed, and while he gazed upon those two young creatures some struggle seemed going on in his heart. He was silent so long that Francesca spoke first.

"Sir, you look doubtful. Is there no roof? Is there not bread enough in yon great city for my brother and for me?"

"Yes, yes; doubt it not!" replied the peer, hastily; "I did but reflect how both might be obtained most readily. But you must not enter London thus! Wait here for an hour or two. Keep back from the highway, and I will send a person who will take charge of you for the night."

Francesca looked at her brother, she saw by his face that he had gathered much of what had been passing, and that some doubt clung to his mind, for he was gazing with a fixed scrutiny on the old courtier; and Francesca had great faith in the almost miraculous intuition with which the lad divined any lurking evil that threatened them. But there was much of genuine feeling in the old courtier just then; for the time all his better nature—so long dormant—was aroused. This Guilo saw written in his features, and his suspicions were appeased. A smile broke over his lips warm with gentle gratitude, and bonding his knee to the old man he kissed his hand. Francesca

knew by this that Guilo was satisfied, and her anxious features lighted up.

"Sir, when the man whom you send shall come, he will find us by the old tree yonder; until nightfall we will not go from thence!"

"Be sure that you do not," replied the peer; "wait for an hour or two, and I will tax your patience no further. Now I must away, or her majesty will reach Hampton court before me."

These last words were muttered in an under tone as the peer mounted his horse. Just as he was gathering up his bridle to ride away, some painful thought seemed to strike Francesca. She started forward and laid her hand upon the rein. Her cheek was pale, and there was a wild tremor in her voice as she said—

"My lord—gentle sir, tell me one thing. Is—is my Lord Bowdon in that great place," she pointed her slender finger toward London. "Will he know of our coming if we yield ourselves to your guidance?"

"No, no—Lord Bowdon is in Cornwall!"

"And—and—" she could not frame the question. Her voice broke, and her sweet lips grew pale with the first effort; but her auditor knew what she would have asked, and answered as if she had spoken out.

"Lord Bowdon is in Cornwall, and unwedded as yet!" Francesca and Guilo each drew a deep breath, for he had been watching every turn of her face, and his heart rose with hers, but with far different sensation. His breath broke up with a pang of sharp pain—hers was a sigh of ineffable relief. It seemed as if a bird of prey had been driven from her heart.

"Oh! we will be sure to wait for your commands," she said, and a smile rendered the soft beauty of her face perfectly dazzling; "Guilo and I will only have pleasant thoughts till they come."

The nobleman smiled, and drawing his bridle gently from Francesca's hold, rode away.

"Now," said Francesca, turning her bright face toward her brother, and conversing after his own fashion; "now we will go down to the old tree there and fill your cup again, Guilo; see it is overturned on the grass. What has become of our hunger, sweet brother? I suppose the scent of the hedge has driven it away. Come, Guilo, come!"

Francesca gathered up her bundle and her lute. How elastic was her step as she went down the hill. How full of gentle light were the large eyes which she turned upon the distant city.

Poor Guilo, had all his efforts to make her forget been unavailing. Did his sister—his world—for she was all the world to him—still allow another to come near his place in her affections? These questions made the young mute very sad; when Francesca turned back to look upon his face, and saw the shadows there, she felt ashamed of her own sweet joy, and generously strove to subdue it. But the violets that grow over the spring, which they had reached, might as well have attempted to choke up its sparkling current, as any power of hers to check or conceal the happiness that had broken over her heart. Lord Bowdon was still unmarried. This knowledge was itself bliss, stronger than all her efforts at self-control.

Guilo flung himself by the spring, and burying his

face in the violet-covered turf, made an effort to conquer the jealous grief that had sprung to life with his sister's joy. He felt that it was ungenerous. He knew that it was wrong. But the poor boy had nothing in the world but his sister's love, and how could he share that, his sole precious wealth, with anything human?

"Guillo, dear Guillo—what is the matter?" questioned the young girl, forcing his face gently from the broken violets, and looking with eyes of anxious love into his.

Guillo made a sign that he was hungry; that the tears which bathed his cheek were wrung from him by a sharp craving after food.

And Francesca tried to believe him. She knew very well that it was a whole day and night since food had passed his lips; and cruel as the thought was, she felt it a relief that his trouble had only this cause. So hushing the sweet tumult in her own bosom, she fell to comforting him with hope. In less

than an hour's time another horseman came over the hill, his livery flowing with scarlet and gold, and bearing the lodge of some lordly house upon his shoulder.

The orphans left their station by the spring, and came forward to meet him.

"Oh! here you are," said the man, reining up his horse, and examining the young creatures from head to foot, with a look of supercilious contempt for their travel-worn garments. "My lord was sure that you would be found hereabout. Come, gather up your bundles, and turn back a mile or so; my lord has ordered a dinner and rooms at the next public house that we pass. Come, I will walk my horse, and you need not lose sight of me."

Guillo took up the little burden of their world possessions, and giving one hand to his sister, followed the man.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 160.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER IX.

Yes, she was beautiful and full of pride—

Such pride as battens on material things;
Shrouding itself in luxury to hide

That hidden sense of shame that goads and stings,
Her life was one wild passion, and her soul
Grew fierce and reckless, lacking all control.

The palace of Hampton Court was always a favorite residence with King Charles II. During the protectorship it had been much neglected, but after the restoration large sums were lavished upon it in repairs and decorations. At first the associations connected with White Hall, and even with London itself were almost insupportable to the son whose father had perished there, and Charles established his court as far as possible from the scene of royal butchery that had given him a tardy crown. The position of this old palace upon the river, the rich country that surrounded it, and its easy distance from town, either by land or water, were of themselves reason enough why it should have been chosen as a favorite residence, independent of all painful associations. A sumptuous and noble pile it was at the time of our story, brilliant with decorations, and swarming with courtiers not yet over the intoxication that followed the return of their monarch to his inheritance. Everything around breathed of artificial life: perfumes floated upon the air, gay colors, smiling faces, fluttering ribands, rich coquetish laughter broke upon the beholder at every side. A few sad hearts there might have been buried in that brilliant pile, but they came not forth to the sunshine, for Charles loved no moody spirits, and those who were bowed by sorrow or disappointment kept aloof from a court where nothing but mirth and good cheer was tolerated.

There was one range of apartments at Hampton Court filled up with a degree of luxury that nothing could surpass. Wealth in its most lavish profusion had been exhausted in rendering these apartments more than regal in their magnificence. Those which the king inhabited, with his young bride, appeared meagre in comparison. This suit of rooms consisted of a bed-chamber, a dressing-room, a withdrawing-room and ante-chamber, all opening to each other, and each vying with its neighbor in lavish splendor. Burnished cornices, from which the golden fruit seemed dropping, ran around the ceiling, upon whose perishable surface art in its warmest and most exquisite form seemed flung in the perfect wantonness of

genius. Gems from the old masters lined the walls. The floors were covered with Persian carpets, where after every foot-tread the flowers rose up from the massy silk as if their delicate stalks had been elastic. On all sides were divans of blue and scarlet velvet, swelling with cushions, and glowing with gold beaufats, piled with rich plate; easy chairs, soft and luxurious as a nook lined with wood moss, and superfluous cushions heaped together in corners ready to be placed upon the couches or beneath the feet of their occupants, should any be indolent enough to require them. All this world of luxury half revealed, half obscured by the silken curtains that muffled the sunshine in their rich folds, or were drawn up to admit bright glimpses of the river, and the far off hills, belonged to that bold, bad woman, the Countess of Castlemain.

It was perhaps eleven o'clock in the morning, and yet these apartments were almost unoccupied. A breakfast-table, spread with the finest damask and the rarest porcelain, was drawn up to an open window, and covers for two were laid upon the table. The steam of chocolate floated idly from a small silver urn, and spread over a plate of snow white bread, a basket of slagree gold, half full of flowers, in which some apricots and fine bunches of grapes with the first bloom upon them, were embedded, and cast a sort of haze upon the whole repast, which was swept away each moment by a gush of air that came through the rosy curtains, sweet from the hawthorn hedges and violet hollows along the river.

The whole of this magnificent room was unoccupied save by a small negro boy, who sat upon a heap of cushions near the table, gazing lazily upon the steam as it rose from the chocolate urn. A turban of orange silk was folded over the ebony forehead of this strange creature, and around his slender person was flung a toga of scarlet thibet wool, which left one arm and half his chest entirely bare. The glossy space from the slender ankle up to his knee was only broken by an anklet of gold, to which was suspended a little jeweled padlock, and a chain of linked gold that ran up to a neck-collar of the same precious metal, either as a fantastic badge of servitude, or as a guard chain to ornaments which from their material and workmanship were of great value.

A slight noise from the next room made the negro start from his half slumber, and look eagerly about. His eyes began to glitter, and rising softly from his cushions he stole to the table, and thrusting his little

black hand into a vase of French confits that stood near the fruit basket, concealed a quantity of the precious sweets in the folds of his toga. Scarcely had he crept back to his pile of cushions when a door was opened, and the Countess of Castlemain, in a loose morning dress of white silk, fastened with profuse knots of rose colored riband, and her hair falling in negligent curls over her shoulders, entered the room. The door behind her was left open, and through it might be seen a bed covered with white satin, surmounted by a canopy, and curtains of crimson damask with rosy linings, that bent over the couch like a sunset cloud floating above a snow drift. The atmosphere was full of fragrant steam that came pouring in from the bath-room, which the countess had just quitted; but the glitter of a superb gold toilet service and of that exquisite couch shone richly through the sweet mist.

"Who has claimed admittance?" said the countess, moving with a sort of languid grace toward the breakfast-table, and tossing over a pile of delicately tinted billets that lay on a chased salver near the chocolate urn; "pooh, Buckingham and his eternal sonnets, I believe the creature keeps a poet as he keeps a French cook, to get up these dainty morsels for my breakfast-table. Oh, from my little friend the manager. The queen will honor him to-night; but the performance shall wait till I come. Yes, yes, and her majesty also, she with the audience, all shall wait. I say, Anthony, do not forget to order my equipage a half hour later this evening than usual!"

The negro half rose from his cushion and fell back with an indolent salam, while the countess merely turned her large, black eyes that way an instant, and went on with her examination of the notes. Some she cast contemptuously away without touching the seals, others she tore open, honored with a glance, and some a sneer before they were flung aside. One or two she read with considerable interest, and then seating herself in a large, easy chair by the breakfast-table, she pushed the salver away so abruptly that half its contents fluttered to the carpet, and called for the negro to place a cushion beneath her feet.

Scarcely had her silken clad foot come in contact with the gold and velvet which the negro presented on one knee, when there was a gentle knock at the door, and Anthony looked up to his mistress for orders; before she could speak the door was quietly pushed open, and Lord Rochley, the old noble, whom we have presented to the reader in other scenes, glided into the chamber.

The countess started up. "Ah, is it you, my lord; this is kind. I have not slept all night from thinking of that exquisite child; Anthony here was droll enough for a time, but since I have seen that strange creature he has become quite disgusting; what a beautiful page he will make—of course you have secured him!"

"Upon my word," said the old noble, dropping one knee to the cushion which the impetuous woman had carelessly spurned away with her foot, and kissing her hand with an air of contemptuous idolatry, such as men unconsciously assume toward women for whom they have some admiration and no respect. "This wandering boy will drive half the court beside

itself if your ladyship raves about him so eloquently a day longer. I am half tempted to smuggle him out of England at once; or what were better, turn traitor and resign him to the other faction."

"To the other faction—what do you mean, my lord?" cried the countess, lifting her large eyes suddenly.

"Oh, nothing, only that the queen has taken as great a liking to the lad as your ladyship, and is resolute to secure him for one of her train-bearers," replied the old peer, with a covert smile as he saw the color mount warmly to Lady Castlemain's cheek. "She has spoken to his majesty about it already!"

"She shall not have him—I tell you, Rochley, she shall not have him—the boy is mine. If she wants a new page let her take Anthony. He will suit her style of face; look at him and say if he will not!"

"Oh, you ladies are so bitter upon one another!" said the old noble, smiling as he turned his eyes upon the apeish little negro, who shook his head and began muttering angrily through the half confits with which his mouth was filled.

"What is the creature choking himself about?" cried the countess, laughing. "I very believe he is angry because I offer him to the queen. You see, my lord!"

"It is to be hoped that your new protegee will be equally fascinated with his mistress," said the old courtier, bowing; "but there is a thing connected with the young lad which may change your designs regarding him—this beautiful boy is a mute!"

"A mute!" cried the countess, with animation, "so much the better; what can be more delightful? That angel face—those wild eyes—that sweet, loving smile with one all the while; and no tongue to wound, or language to sting. My lord the creature is a jewel—you only interest me more and more. Bring him hither at once. If Anthony will not go to the queen, why let him be made useful among my women. His collar and fetters there can be left behind for my wandering beauty."

The negro, who was listening with great eagerness, here grasped his golden anklets with both hands, and crouching down on the cushions, began to moan and weep bitterly, protesting that he would neither give up his ornaments, nor be sent to the queen. But the countess only cast an impatient glance that way, and bade him be still or carry his clamor into the ante-room.

"But that is not all," said Lord Rochley; "this child who has been so fortunate as to obtain notice from the most beautiful women in the realm—this child has a sister, his twin, I think, who will not be separated from him; and from whom he refuses to part even for an hour."

"A sister, and beautiful as he is!" cried the countess, aghast with surprise and displeasure.

"The girl is, if possible, more beautiful than her brother!"

"And she has the gift of speech, I doubt not," cried the countess, with brightened color.

"Like all her sex!" replied the courtier, with honied sarcasm.

"Then!" cried the countess, angrily, "I will have

neither boy nor girl. Let them go, I want no female beauties who can smile, and—and—" Here the haughty woman choked herself; the shrewd smile that crept softly over the old peer's lips, warned her that she was expressing her feelings quite too frankly.

"You are right," said Lord Rochley, allowing the smile to deepen into an expression of cordial sympathy; "you are right now as ever, no one thinks more wisely than your ladyship at all times; but then there is her majesty, determined to have this pretty page at any cost."

"True, true; and only because I seemed to fancy he creature—I tell you it is nothing but the spirit of opposition to me—it is so in everything. You remember about the open carriage which his majesty received from France but last week, the most perfect thing ever imagined; well, no sooner did the Portuguese lady learn that I had set my heart on appearing in it, than she must insist upon exhibiting her dumpy person and smooth features in this superb equipage."

"And did you yield?" inquired Rochley, as if he were ignorant of the scandal which had filled the court for a week.

"Did I yield!" cried the countess, with intense scorn—"did I yield to Catharine of Braganza!" and she smiled in contempt of the supposition.

"But," said the old peer, anxious to draw the lady from any discussion of her contests with the queen, which were usually violent and interminable; "I keep your ladyship from breakfast. Pray let Anthony pour out a cup of chocolate, and we can talk over this affair of the page meantime!"

"Nay, here are cups for two," said the countess, pushing a cup of rich porcelain toward the earl. "I thought, perhaps, that the king might look in a moment before he goes to the park—but no matter! Anthony, here!"

The negro started up with a degree of alacrity that made the golden chains rattle against his ebony limbs. He filled two cups from the silver urn, and presented that of the countess with bended knee, as if she had in truth a royal claim to such homage.

"Now," said the earl, slowly drawing his spoon across the creamy surface of his chocolate—"now let us decide what shall be done with the boy whom we have absolutely picked up from the hedge. The queen knows that he is under my protection, as one of her gentlemen was at the little public inn near Richmond when I had them brought in. Catharine, it seems, had sent him to conduct them to the palace."

"She shall not have the boy!" cried the countess, with renewed determination; "he must, he shall come into my service, and that without the girl too. Surely, my lord, you who never are outmaneuvered in your own objects, can accomplish this for me."

"I do not know," replied the earl, with a faint smile. "It is dangerous work interfering with ladies, especially when they have crowns, with which to establish their pretty caprices."

Lady Castlemain looked up, and a scornful smile shone in her black eyes.

"And so you, too, my lord—you, too, are among those who think that Catharine of Braganza is more a queen than I!"

"Oh! you are both queens," replied the wily old courtier. "You are the queen of beauty and of love—she of this good realm."

"I comprehend. Your sweet speeches are not thrown away, my lord; but just now we have other things to talk of—this boy is in your hands. Is he destined for my service, or will this Portuguese lady find her influence more powerful with you than mine has proved?"

"Nay, you are getting angry, sweet countess, and that in my eyes renders your beauty superb. It half tempts me to gratify the queen in her fancy for the child, if it were only to prove that one man in the world can resist the full blaze of attractions that have thrice enslaved a monarch."

The countess answered him with an impatient movement of the head; and angrily tearing the grapes from a cluster that she had just taken from the fruit basket, she tossed them back among the flowers with a gesture at once graceful and impetuous.

"But the boy—the boy!" she cried.

"He shall be yours," answered the earl, quietly dropping his hand into the basket, and mellowing an apricot between his thumb and finger. "I intended it all the time, but it is only when your ladyship is opposed that one has an opportunity of seeing the entire triumph of your beauty; the child is yours, though it make her majesty my bitter enemy forever."

"This is kind, I shall not forget it," cried the countess, her face radiant with pleasure; "and here, as the Portuguese lady would say, we give you our hand to kiss."

The malicious woman reached forth her snowy hand, and falling into an attitude peculiar to the young queen, imitated the broken English and constrained manner of that ill used lady with just enough exaggeration to excite ridicule, without being absolutely coarse.

Laughing softly at her mischievous humor, the earl pressed his lips to the fair hand held toward him. But he had scarcely raised his head when footsteps crossed the ante-chamber, and with a light knock, which Anthony had no time to answer, a gentleman, somewhat heavy in person and in countenance, entered the room.

Both the earl and countess rose at his appearance, and the lady advanced a step smiling brightly, and with her hand extended. Charles—for it was the king—touched the fair hand with his lips, and then grasping it with a light shake in his, led her back to the breakfast-table, nodding good humoredly to the earl, who stood leaning on the back of his chair.

"Sit down—sit down," said Charles, dropping into the easy chair which Anthony wheeled up to the table, and throwing the black velvet cloak with its diamond star and crimson silk linings loose from his shoulders. "I am glad to find you here, my lord; a messenger has just gone to your house. Her majesty has taken a fancy to some wandering boy that gave her a cup of water, or something of the kind on her way from Richmond, and whom it seems your lordship gathered up from the way side. Nothing would do but I must promise to beg the creature of you for a page. So I pray you, in this fair presence, not to

refuse the first feminine caprice that our queen has indulged in since her advent in the realm."

The Earl of Rochley bowed low with his usual bland smile, and glanced at the countess, whose vermilion lips were closing with an angry expression, and whose eyes began to flash.

"Your majesty shall decide for me," said the old peer. "Lady Castlemain was making the same request not a moment since."

Charles lifted his eyes, and met the signs of passion that he so well understood in that beautiful face. A look of perplexity came over his own dark features, and as a resource he fell to a close investigation of the table, as if searching for something that might tempt his appetite.

"Odsfsh," he said, at last, looking up with a constrained laugh, "we are getting into a new dilemma, it seems. My sweet lady countess, for once we trust to your generosity; remember the queen is a stranger as yet, and we must not always thwart her wishes."

The countess drew up her superb form, and while her cheek burned crimson, and the angry flash of her eyes broke through her long lashes like lightning from a cloud, she bent her head, and in a voice that trembled with passion, said, "she had no will save that of his majesty," and then left the room, violently closing the bed chamber door after her. Charles turned his eyes upon the Earl of Rochley with a look of comic distress.

"You see how it is," he said, "unless you can devise some means of reconciling things, there will be nothing but storms in this wing of the palace for a month to come!"

Lord Rochley bent his head and smiled.

"Shall I go to the queen? Perhaps she may be persuaded out of this fancy."

"Odsfsh—no," replied Charles, shaking his head. "I never saw her majesty so eager for anything; and both you and Clarendon know well that she can be obstinate in her quiet way as well as her imperious ladyship yonder."

"Perhaps I may find some argument that will reconcile her majesty; at least I can but fail! Shall I go at once?"

"Do so!" replied Charles, with the air of a man half ashamed of his position; "prevent, if possible, any new gossip spreading through the court. That of the French carriage has done mischief enough already."

"Depend upon it, sire, the countess shall have her page, and the queen must be satisfied!" said the earl, gliding toward the door, and into the ante-chamber, where he took his leave with a profound bow, and proceeded to the apartments occupied by Catharine of Braganza.

CHAPTER X.

Nothing could be more simple and chaste than the apartments in which Lord Rochley found the young Queen of England. Hangings of thick watered silk starred with silver, which alone broke their waving snow; a devotional desk of ebony rimmed with pearl; a couch or two, where polished ebony took a more lustrous black from cushions of white and silver, with

a soft green carpet, where snow-drops and valley lilies seemed sleeping in their native moss, formed a chaste and striking contrast to the joyous confusion which the earl had just quitted.

Catharine was sitting before her desk, upon which was a crucifix of gold, marvelous in the beauty of its workmanship, and an illuminated miscel, with a large ruby blazing upon each half of the golden clasp, as if everything was to strike her visitor with the most severe contrast. Catharine, though she had evidently but just arisen from breakfast, was dressed with great precision and neatness. There were no disheveled tresses, no slipshod splendor about her person, such as had marked the careless costume of Lady Castlemain. Her robe was of black satin, high on the bust, and relieved at the throat and wrists by a fall of exquisite point lace, that cast its gossamer shadow over her small hands, and a neck, which, if it lacked whiteness, was both graceful and well formed. Her thick, raven hair was simply confined by a diamond bodkin, and nothing could be more perfect in symmetry than the small foot that peeped from beneath the folds of her robe. Still Catharine could boast nothing of the superb beauty, bold, imperious and dazzling, that distinguished her rival. A look of disquiet rested upon her features; and her really beautiful eyes were full of touching sadness as she turned them gently upon her visitor.

"My lord you are welcome," she said, in her sweet broken English, that sounded peculiarly child-like and feminine after the haughty tones that had last fallen upon his ear. "You have come to bring me news of the strange child that has haunted me ever since I saw him. I am not weary, my lord, it is of him you would speak."

"Yes, it was on his behalf I came thus early to crave your majesty's attention," said the earl, rising from the profound bow with which he had lifted Catharine's hand to his lips.

"And have you brought him with you?" inquired the queen, with animation. "Methought—say was I wrong that—the child had a foreign look? Perhaps he came from my own land. Did your lordship speak with him?"

"Lady, the boy is a mute!"

"Alas! can this be true, and so beautiful; do you know, my lord, I was just wondering if he could sing well. Methought I saw a lute lying on the grass near his little bundle, and so was half designing to place him among our foreign band of musicians."

"The child's infirmity renders your majesty's generous intentions impossible," replied the earl, carefully watching each turn of the conversation.

"Still we must do something for him; this want of speech should not disqualify him for our page. It is a pity he cannot sing."

"Perhaps your highness may be gratified even in this—the mute has a sister."

"A sister, and beautiful as he is," cried the queen.

"Even more beautiful, and with all other bright qualifications that can please your highness. Nothing can be sweeter than her voice!"

"And has she the same tender look? Does she speak English?"

"Perfectly; and Spanish also!"

"Oh! this is happiness. They shall both be placed about our person; the maiden may become our teacher in English; she shall read to us at night when the time hangs heavily in the king's absence. Now that my poor Portuguese ladies are sent away, I sadly want some one who will serve me as they did for love of myself. This beautiful girl—a stranger in a strange land—will she not love one, who, though a queen, has learned to weep more than she ought in her husband's kingdom. Say, my lord, think you not these strange children will learn to love the queen?"

There was touching sadness in Catharine's voice, and Lord Rochley observed that it was with difficulty that she kept the tears from starting to her fine eyes.

"Who could help loving so much goodness!" exclaimed the earl, with more sincerity than was usual in his flattering speeches. Catharine so soon cast aside from her husband's love, regarded every manifestation of personal sympathy from his courtiers with peculiar gratitude. She smiled, therefore, but very faintly upon the old noble, and said—

"Well, my lord, you will bring these children to me at once; they shall find no harsh mistress in Catharine!"

"It is this that troubles me somewhat," replied the earl. "Before I knew of your majesty's desire, a lady of the court had won my promise to place one of these pretty wanderers among her attendants. The request was given in kindness, and my promise given unconditionally."

"Indeed!" said the queen, looking suddenly up; "and who was the kind lady?"

The earl hesitated, and even in his warm cheek the crimson mounted vividly, as it now burned upon the neck and brow of the injured wife.

"My promise was given to the Countess of Castlemain; but I should deeply grieve if it were the cause of annoyance to your highness!"

The color fled from Catharine's face; her lips began to quiver, and bending her eyes as if to gain full command over her outraged feelings, she inquired in a low voice if this promise had been made at the suggestion of the king.

Rochley answered, and indeed truly, that it had not. Catharine drew a deep breath, and a look of relief came over her features.

"It is well," she said, very gently; "we can consent no possession with the Countess of Castlemain. Still unless your lordship is not pledged against it, let the maiden be sent to us. If she has beauty and feeling, the queen's protection may avail her something!"

"This is as I could have wished," replied Rochley, and again he was perfectly sincere. "My heart revolted at the thought of placing this lovely child under less exceptionable protection than that which your highness has just graciously proposed." Again Catharine betrayed in her eloquent looks the satisfaction these words had given her.

And the artful old courtier lost no change of her eloquent features. He was playing a deep game, in which the king—the innocent and helpless queen—with the vindictive Castlemain, were to be moved according to his skill. He arose from the chair which

Catharine had graciously requested him to assume, and with deep reverence prepared to withdraw.

"When will it be your highness' pleasure to receive this pretty wanderer?"

"I would that she were here now; methinks if she possesses to sweet a voice, it might charm away the sad thoughts that seem to haunt me to-day," replied the queen, with gentle melancholy.

"She does but wait your royal pleasure in my carriage! In five minutes time she may be introduced," said the earl.

"Let her come, and her poor mute brother if he is in the carriage also. I would see these sweet children together."

"Your highness shall be gratified," replied the earl, and with another profound bow he left the royal cabinet. When he was gone, and Catharine found herself quite alone, she placed her clasped hands upon the reading desk, and dropping her forehead upon them began to weep.

"Alas! alas! will anything ever love me?" she cried, in a voice that was broken with passionate grief. "This poor boy, the only creature that has ever given me a look of pity that was not humiliating. Even him will this bad woman deprive me of—and I—I who am a queen—a bride—dare not contest the point from dread that in this, as in things of greater moment, my husband would force me to yield."

A little time and the poor young queen forced back her broken sobs, and wiping the tears from her inky lashes, composed herself to receive the earl, whose footsteps sounded in the ante-chamber. He entered the cabinet, and following him hand in hand, with that sort of clinging trust upon each other that banished fear, came Francesca and Guilo. Refreshments and a night of quiet rest had rendered their appearance less travel-worn and dejected; while upon the sweet face of Francesca beamed that bright glare of happiness that had broken over it as a rose bursts into bloom when the Earl of Rochley told her that Lord Bowdon was still unwedded.

Francesca knew that she was to meet the same lady who had taken an interest in her destitution, and who in exchange for her music would give food and shelter to herself and Guilo. But she had no idea that the young female who bent her eyes with so much melancholy kindness upon her as she entered the cabinet, could be the queen. The simplicity of her dress, the quiet repose of her manners, and above all the look and tone that proclaimed her of foreign birth, were enough to arouse powerful sympathy at the first sight in a creature so sensitive and full of warm impulses as Francesca. She paused an instant at the door, gazing earnestly at the queen, and then at Guilo, her second soul. His eyes were full of pleasant astonishment; his lips were parted, and a bright smile trembled over them. He pressed Francesca's hand, and with one impulse the orphans approached the queen, waiting for no introduction, and knelt at her feet.

Touched to the heart by this impulsive homage, Catharine, forgetting all etiquette, and even in the presence of Lord Rochley, bent her head and kissed Francesca upon the forehead, while her small hand lay caressingly among Guilo's curls.

"You will learn to love me!" she said, bending her large eyes, now full of tears, upon the young girl.

"I do love you!" said Francesca, meeting the queen's glance with eyes tearful as her own; "and Guilo—Guilo loves nothing that is not good—see how he smiles when you look upon him!"

"Are they not beautiful, these little wanderers?" cried the queen, smiling through her tears, and lifting her face to the earl, while her hand still rested upon Guilo's head. "Do not blame these tears, my lord, these children are strangers like myself!"

"We are strangers," said Francesca, clasping Guilo's hand in hers, and resting both upon the queen's lap; "and if you are such, dear lady, there is great reason why we should love you well!"

Francesca had no idea that the terms of equality which she was using were in the least improper. Even had she been aware of the queen's rank, the young creature was so unaccustomed to the world, and so profoundly ignorant of the usages of a court, that it is doubtful if she could have fully appreciated the immense social difference between a wandering singer and the high-born lady at whose feet she knelt. And this very ignorance was a new charm with the queen. Her affectionate heart, disappointed and thrown back upon itself in a strange land, absolutely athirst for some evidence of disinterested affection, turned to this little well spring that seemed to have gushed at once from the arid barren of her court life, as the thirsty Arab rushes to the desert spring.

"Oh! if they could both remain with me," said Catharine, looking wistfully at the earl; "poor things, they are all the world to each other!"

"My word, my pledged word!" replied Lord Rochley, with a deprecating smile; "your majesty must not tempt me to violate that!"

"Still it seems hard to separate them!" pleaded the queen.

"They will be under the same roof, and thus can see each other often!" was the rejoinder.

"True," replied the queen, turning pale while the pleading smile died upon her lips. "I had forgotten that advantage."

There was a tinge of bitterness in Catharine's voice that Lord Rochley could well understand as a reproof. She became anxious to change the subject, and to remove Guilo before he became the subject of more urgent entreaty.

"Your majesty has not tested the maiden's skill," he said; "shall I bid a page bring in her lute from the ante-chamber?"

Catharine bent her head, and the earl went out.

"Majesty—majesty. Is not that a title which the people of England give to their king and queen?" said Francesca, with singular tranquillity.

"It is," replied Catharine, smiling at the puzzled expression that came over Francesca's features.

"And *only* to the king or queen?" continued the young girl.

"Only to them," was Catharine's reply.

"Then, lady, why was it that Lord Rochley said your majesty just now?"

"Because," said Catharine, bending her head while the tears rushed to her eyes, and her olive cheeks took a dusky crimson; "because I am the Queen of England."

Francesca turned to her brother almost breathless, and made a quick sign. The boy lifted his eyes earnestly to the queen, as if to re-peruse her features. Then bowing down, he gently raised the hem of her robe and pressed it to his lips.

The sign which Francesca made was this—

"Guilo this is a queen, and yet do you not see how she suffers!"

And Guilo answered by kissing the queen's robe. Never before or since did a sovereign receive homage so ardent or so pure.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 106

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER XI.

I have sought the reason oft
They paint love as a child, and still have thought
It was because their love, like infancy,
Frank, trusting, unobservant in its mood,
Doth show its wish at once, and means no more.

KNOWLES.

Just at nightfall, one evening in the early spring, the household retainers of Bowdon Castle were assembled at their vesper meal in the great stone hall. Across the upper end of the noble room ran a massive oaken table laden with rounds of beef, platters of venison, and such heavy fare as composed a meal in those days. Each dish was flanked by a great silver flagon, foaming over with stout ale, and at the upper end of the board, near the housekeeper's chair, stood an imposing stoup of claret, which was intended to circulate most freely among the female members of the household. Some of the men servants, stimulated by the rich savor that rose in a cloud from the table, exhibited a disposition to commence on the tempting fare before the strict ideas of propriety always maintained by the old housekeeper, seemed to warrant them in doing so. But no one ventured to sit down while the good lady maintained her erect position by the great oaken chair, at the head of the board. It was fifteen minutes beyond the usual dinner hour, and the appetising fumes that arose from the table had well nigh tempted the majority from their allegiance to the stout old lady, who rustling in silk, and staunch in her pride of authority, only condescended to keep them in order by a gentle wave of her hand, which, though gentle, was imperative and effectual. The eager eyes and moist lips that surrounded her might have won a less rigid disciplinarian to compassion; but the old housekeeper stood firm till the appearance of the butler, bearing a pair of plump grouse on a silver dish, warranted her in assuming the oaken chair with a certainty that her young lord had arisen from his evening meal.

"As usual," observed the good lady, examining the birds with a sigh as the butler placed his burden before her. "Just a thin slice carved from the breast, and that is all; day by day he eats less and less. What will be the end of this?"

"He must leave the castle—he must go up to court and see the world," replied the butler, who bent his ear close to the old lady, and with difficulty gathered her words amid the clash of platters, and the eager sound of many a mouth. "He has never been himself since that awful night when the ship went down!"

"Rather since those poor children were lost!" replied the housekeeper, shaking her head; "I only wish we could get some tidings of the poor things."

"Tidings!" replied the butler, "when the sea gives up its dead we shall have tidings of them, but not till then; our master has worried his life out in travelling about the country hoping to find them, when I really think a fishing-net would have been the thing to search with."

"It may be so!" said the housekeeper, "but while my young lord has a doubt, he will never be at rest, never eat a hearty meal again," and casting a mournful look at the dish of grouse, the old lady shook her head and heaved another profound sigh.

"If some company would but come now!" suggested the butler, seating himself by the housekeeper, and dividing one of the birds with his knife. Transferring a portion to his own platter, while he moved the dish gently toward the old lady, he added—"but tell me, dear Mrs. Weld, if your pretty maiden is above ground, do you not think that some of the court gallants we had at Bowdon at that time, might tell where she is? That old lord with the star and riband—I saw him more than once talking with her in the grounds!"

"No, no—it is not that—the maiden was innocent and good," cried the old woman, animated with generous love of the young creature whom she had helped to save; "innocent as the angels, I tell you, else would not our master grieve over her loss as he does."

"Well, well, I only wish he may get over the moping spirit that has beset him!" said the butler, betaking himself to the game on his plate; "nothing troubles me like seeing a young man lose his appetite."

"It is a mournful thing to witness!" replied the housekeeper, appropriating a portion of the proffered dish, but partaking of it sparingly, for the subject upon which she was discoursing really distressed the good woman, and she added to herself in a thoughtful under tone, "but if I saw into those young hearts truly, there might have been deeper cause for sorrow; this is a strange world, and sometimes our best acts are those which bring great evil in the end."

By this time the butler was deeply absorbed in appeasing an appetite always vigorous, and he seemed to have forgotten everything but his delicious occupation. The other occupants of the table were far too busy for speech; and for half an hour nothing was heard but the clatter of knives and forks, the bubbling

of ale, and those abrupt fragments of speech that appertained directly to the occupation of the table.

All at once there arose a sound through the castle, so unusual that several at the table dropped their knives, and two or three tankards remained in the air, while the holders paused in astonishment to listen. It was the bell sounding loudly at the great entrance.

"Guests," exclaimed the housekeeper, with animation, glancing at the porter, who arose deliberately, brushed some bread crumbs from the folds of his voluminous dress, and moved away with a dissatisfied air. "It must be guests from London."

But the good woman's conjectures were cut short by another bell sounding from an entrance to the kitchen, which some of the servants went to answer. This unusual commotion soon cleared the table of those who surrounded it; and while the old lady was giving some orders to the housemaid, there entered the room a young woman short, plump and rosy, with that sort of April countenance that ever brings cheerful thoughts with it. She had evidently come from a distance, for her pretty head was surmounted by a cloth hat, broad leaved, and not unlike those worn by our Quakers of the present day, except that the crown was surrounded by a twist of scarlet ribbon, that flowed down to the sloping shoulders of the fair owner, giving dash and spirit to an article of dress otherwise masculine and ungainly. That portion of the stranger's neck left uncovered by the broad, double ruff, was full and white as snow; over her dress of crimson worsted she wore a long and ample apron of snow white linen; and her plump little feet were encased in leathern shoes, so neatly laced that with every step one might remark the tapering and spirited beauty of the ankle, which the thick blue hose, dashed with white by sitting very closely, rather increased than otherwise.

A bright smile of recognition spread over the housekeeper's face as the young woman entered, and crossing the hall, her silk dress rustling at every step, the good woman held out her hand with a hearty welcome, that brought tears into the eyes of her pretty visitor.

"You are right welcome to Bowdon, niece Eunice, the more welcome because we did not expect you."

The young visitor set down a wicker basket which she carried on one arm, and without heeding the hand which her aunt extended, flung herself upon the good woman's neck, and fell to kissing her with warm expressions of delight. This outbreak of affection brought dew into the old lady's eyes, which, with all her dignity at stake, she could not prevent forming into glad tears, though the servants were by to witness what she deemed a direction from proper decorum.

"There, there, Eunice, wait till we are alone!" said the good woman, striving faintly to free herself from the arms that were flung around her, and ending the struggle by a hearty return of the embrace she could not find the heart to repulse. "How is your husband?—where is he?—how did you come?—not alone surely—oh, you are looking so well, Eunice, dear!"

"And you, my good aunt, larger around the waist by two inches at least," cried Eunice, laughing, and flushed like a rose as she removed her arms and again flung them around the ample waist of her kinswoman, locking her fair fingers in a clasp behind.

"See, when I went away the tip of my longest fingers would just touch the wrist; now I can hardly clasp them. You talk of trouble, aunt!" and the joyous little woman held up her hand shaking it playfully, though you might have seen the fresh tears spring into her eyes all the time.

"Eunice, Eunice, I thought marriage would have tamed you," cried Mrs. Weld, performing her share of the scene awkwardly enough, for she felt in every nerve that her dignity was suffering before the household, many of whom were servants who had entered the domain with their young lord; she would not have cared for the old men, who, like herself, had petted Eunice from her cradle up.

"Oh, nothing of the sort, aunt; ask John Bruce if I have not grown wilder than ever since you let me marry him. He is always saying that he would give the world to know how you managed to keep me so demure and quiet. Do you know he really thought that I was a Puritan only cheating you!"

"Oh, John is greatly to be pitied, I fear," said the old butler, joining the scene, and exchanging smiles with the housekeeper, while he stole upon Eunice unawares, and slyly kissed her cheek, sending the rich bloom like a flash all over her face and neck.

"Just now I think he is!" cried the little woman, striving to laugh off her confusion, and shaking hands with the butler—then for the first time observing that many strange faces filled the hall, she drew close to her aunt in great trepidation. But her discomposure was brief; the next instant she was chatting merrily again with some of the old servants who came crowding round to claim a share of her gay notice. "Oh, here is John—here comes John Bruce to speak for himself," she cried out, with a laugh and a blush as a man perhaps five and thirty—he might be five years older—entered the room with that half shy, half sententious manner that had marked the Puritans of Cromwell's time, while his dress partook of the austere fashions that had prevailed in that sect some fifteen years before. "Come hither, John Bruce, and tell these good people if I, little Eunice, have not made the most perfect wife that ever proved traitor to her own king, by throwing herself away upon a round-head!"

"Throwing herself away!" said John Bruce, approaching the group with a coldness of manner that was in chilling contrast with the joyous abandon of his wife, and gravely shaking hands with such persons in the hall as were known to himself; "truly, Eunice, considering the circumstances under which we were joined together in holy matrimony, this term of speech becometh little the lips of my wife."

The cold reproof, and the still more icy manner which marked the entrance of John Bruce, cast a chill all around, even upon the buoyant spirit of his wife. It had even a deeper effect upon the housekeeper, who appeared greatly hurt by some meaning conveyed in his speech; she drew herself up more

ectly and received the greeting of her guest with the most rigid civility. To her his coming to Bowdon was unexpected and ill-timed; she wondered at his audacity; she trembled with fear of the consequences.

But all thoughts of her new guests were soon swept from her mind by the appearance of Lord Bowdon's valet, with the information that the bell that had startled them so announced a guest from London, who would spend some days at the castle, and for whom supper must be prepared.

"Come, niece Eunice, come; I have given two of the housemaids a holiday. If you are not too weary try to fall into your old habits, and help to make the young lord's guest comfortable."

"What, is the young lord at home?" cried Eunice, with sparkling eyes, untying her hat, and revealing a mass of light brown ringlets that no effort of hers could coax entirely out of curl, though strenuous exertions had been made in good faith to meet the exactions of her husband regarding the ungilded ornament, as he sacrilegiously termed those bright and golden waves of hair. "Shall I see him, aunt, dear? Let me carry in the supper—I used to be his play-fellow—he will not have grown proud and forgotten that—I am very, very sure. Shall I go with you, aunt?"

With her face all in a glow, and swinging her heavy hat in one hand by the riband, Eunice followed the housekeeper, without being in the least conscious of the dark frown that sat on the forehead of her liege lord, or the muttered words of dissatisfaction that followed her as she left the hall.

CHAPTER XII.

THE young lord of Bowdon had been lingering full half an hour by his solitary supper-table, with a glass of untasted wine at his elbow, and his fine eyes bent to the floor in that deep abstraction which sometimes chains the mind to perfect thralldom, by casting sad memories of the past firmly around it. A great change had fallen upon him since we first saw him, in the full strength of moral and physical energy, breasting the storm with young Francesca in his arms. A look of settled depression—so painful to behold on the brow of a healthy man—lay upon every feature of his noble face; his eyes were heavy and sad; and his mouth, that had always seemed to have a smile near it, was more settled in its expression. If he did smile—and that was but seldom—there was blended with the transient sunshine that which chilled it into something mournful. But these were symptoms of internal sorrow that none but a close observer would have noticed. To all but the old servants who loved their lord so well that no shadow of change could fall upon him unnoticed, Lord Bowdon was still the most fortunate noble, and most enviable man in all Cornwall.

The young noble might have remained in the fit of abstraction that had fallen upon him till late in the evening, as he had done many a night before, but for the loud ringing of the bell which had caused so much commotion in the great hall. For months there had been no guests received at Bowdon, and this announcement of one surprised the young lord almost

as much as it had done the servants. He arose from the table, went to the same casement from which he had leaned on the night of the storm, and drawing aside the drapery, looked out. A cavalier, followed by what appeared to be a servant on horseback, was waiting at the entrance.

"It must be some one from the court," muttered the young lord, turning away, and pacing up and down the chamber, excited by that sort of nervous apprehension which constant anxiety and long seclusion was calculated to excite. "Well, well, I care not how soon it comes; I have no desire now but to drop down life with the current; I care not who guides my little bark, or in good sooth where or when it strikes. Had that poor young creature lived I might have struggled against fate, but now——"

Here Lord Bowdon fell into another musing fit, from which he was only aroused by the tread of approaching feet, and a voice which seemed familiar, asking some careless question of the attendant.

Lord Bowdon started, and a gleam of pleasure swept over his face as the door was flung open, and a young cavalier, fluttering with ribands, and with the white plume of his hat sweeping half way to his sword belt, came into the room.

"Sir John Payton!" said Bowdon, advancing to meet his guest, "you are right welcome to this gloomy castle of mine."

"And well I may be," cried the guest, casting his plumed hat upon a table with one hand, and warmly returning Bowdon's grasp with the other. "Why, oddsfish, man, as old Rowley would say, the old pile looks as gloomy as a family vault, and as dull. Yes, faith, it were no treason to say it, as dull as the queen's chamber, than which a more stupid place, they tell me, cannot be found in the three kingdoms."

"This," said Bowdon, with a faint smile, "tells me that you are fresh from the court."

"No, by my faith," replied the guest, casting a glance at the supper-table, where some fruit and wine were left; "I am fresh from nothing but a hard ride and a long feast. My good fellow," he added, turning to the valet, who stood by the door, "pray inform my inestimable friend, Dame Weld, that I, Sir John Payton, the most devoted admirer of her fair self, and especially of her household virtues, am standing here tired to death and half famished; to say nothing of the groom without, who has not spoken a civil word during the last five hours."

"See that supper is prepared!" added Bowdon, smiling at the free and easy orders of his guest.

"And hark ye, my man," said Sir John, following the valet to the door, "let the wine be of the vintage we drank on your lord's birth-day; this chamber requires its mellow fragrance to liven up the atmosphere meantime."

Sir John interrupted himself to fill a glass from the wine upon the table, which he drained with an affected shudder.

"Claret," he exclaimed, setting down the glass, and drawing a white hand across his mouth, "no wonder you have grown so monkish; solitary meals and claret at the end, without even a rosy checked country maid to serve the fare. Bah, you are the only cavalier in

England who would submit to the thing, much less take it of his own free choice!"

"At least," said Lord Bowdon, laughing, "I will not force your submission. The wine shall be to your taste, never fear; and the viands too."

"Well, now that I am certain of not perishing with want in your dismal old walls," said Sir John, casting himself into a chair, "let us sit down and talk over the good old times when we came down from London on purpose to shake these old turrets with the roys-tering happiness they had not witnessed in many a year. Why, man, you should never have allowed the canting Puritan spirit to creep back again after that jolly carouse."

"The Puritan spirit is only in your fancy," said Lord Bowdon, quietly taking a seat near his guest.

"Fancy!" replied the other—"oddsfish—that is the king's oath, and I always choose to measure my profanity by a crowned head, there is something regal in it. I should not be astonished some fine morning to see your love-locks cut short, and the head they adorn left round as a tennis ball."

"Well," said Lord Bowdon, whose spirits were too low toned for continued enjoyment of his friend's badinage. "You say nothing of yourself. What news bring you from the court?"

"From the court—nothing! I was in London a day or two; but the king is at Hampton, and I had no time to present myself before coming down hither."

"Then you are not a messenger?—you bring no summons for me to appear at court?"

"Summons—no, I have not seen old Rowley these four months!"

"But how have you, an inveterate courtier, managed to live so long away from his majesty?"

"You might rather have asked," replied Sir John, with a laugh, "how I could manage to live away from his beautiful countess; by my faith, Bowdon, that is a superb woman!"

"Of her class, perhaps; but I am no judge!" was the somewhat grave reply. "Those who love the king best have reason to regret that her name has ever been heard at court, especially since the marriage."

"Yes, there I do think things have been done which Rowley himself would gladly have avoided," replied Sir John, seriously; "but then the woman is so magnificent in her beauty; and the little queen you know—"

"Is innocent, and if not beautiful, very lovely," interrupted Lord Bowdon; "I trust for his own sake, and for the honor of our English name, Charles will not forget the respect due to her virtues and her station."

Sir John Payton laughed, and in his careless way turned the subject; that moment supper came in, and he was really in want of refreshments. For half an hour he was too agreeably employed for any conversation that was not exceedingly fragmentary; but as the sharp edge of his appetite was taken off, he began to trifle with the rich viands, and gradually fell into connected discourse again.

"By the way, I saw Rochley in London, and we were talking over the storm you got up for us last autumn; he would have it that you were kept away from the civilized world by the beautiful little foreigner that you fished out of the waves."

"Lord Rochley knew better!" said Bowdon, turning pale, and with an intonation of the voice that made Sir John look up from his plate.

"Very likely—the old earl is a sly, shrewd fellow, but sometimes he hits wide of the mark, as well as the youngest of us. But he has a quick eye for beauty, and it is no bad compliment to your lordly protegee that he bore her perfections in mind so long; even the countess expresses herself delighted with Rochley's praise."

"The countess," exclaimed Bowdon, impatiently, "I beseech you, Payton, mention not that audacious woman in the same breath with my—with Francesca."

"I cry your pardon," exclaimed Sir John, casting down the napkin with which he had been chafing his hands. "There is no knowing what wild freak this solitude may not engender, but it is not possible that you are seriously attached to this pretty mermaid."

"You know too well that I cannot in honor become attached to any one!"

"In honor!" and Sir John laughed; there was no mirth in his laugh, however, and that, like all his conversation after Francesca was mentioned, had a shade of constraint in it. If he had rattled on carelessly before, there was evidently a purpose in his words now.

"Surely," said Lord Bowdon, with some sternness in his tone and manner: "surely, Sir John, you even in jest would not deem me capable of other motives toward an orphan child cast by God himself under the protection of my roof?"

"I do not know!" replied Sir John, gravely enough. "Judging from what I see of you it is impossible; but from what I know of others it seems natural enough: why the king himself would only laugh at it."

"Then the king is——" Lord Bowdon paused, and added in a calm tone—"my sovereign and I will not think thus ill of him!"

The conversation was checked here by the appearance of Eunice Bruce, who glided into the room, her pretty face all smiles, and bearing a salver of fruit in her hands. She had taken off her hat and the huge double ruff, leaving her full white neck and the rich waves of her hair exposed in all their beauty. A ringlet or two had broken loose—perhaps pretty Eunice had some share in the matter—from the heavy knot in which the rest were confined, and streamed in tresses of dusky gold down over her crimson bodice below the full, but symmetrical waist.

As Eunice set the tray down, you might see by the tremor of her hands and smooth white arms that she was desperately frightened.

She turned her eyes timidly upon Lord Bowdon, and her lips parted as if she were about to speak; but Lord Bowdon was thoughtfully trifling with a wine glass, and did not even know that his fruit was brought in by any but the usual person. Sir John was quicker sighted—he gave a perceptible start as the young woman came in, and kept his eyes fixed upon her all the time that she was busy placing the fruit before him. As Eunice turned her eyes from the face of Lord Bowdon, they encountered the bold and admiring glance of Sir John. Her long lashes instantly fell, and a vivid blush spread over her face and neck.

"Give me a handful of filberts, and one of those golden apples, my pretty maiden," said Sir John, without turning his gaze from her blushing face.

There was something mellow and changed in the voice of his guest that made Lord Bowdon look up just as Eunice had taken an apple in a hand that shook like a leaf, and was warm with the rich crimson that seemed to flush her whole person. Looks of surprise, then of doubt, quickly followed by a glow of kindly recognition, chased each other over his face. Eunice was looking at him then, her eyes began to kindle; the blush upon her cheek ripened like a peach; and a smile—such a smile—it was like sunlight breaking up from the heart of a rose, parted her mouth.

"My lord," she said, in a voice that scarcely rose above her panting breath—"my lord you have forgotten little Eunice!"

"Not so; I only wondered to find my pretty playmate so womanly, and at her sudden appearance!" said Lord Bowdon, with a well pleased and gentle smile. He was about to add something more, but the expression of Sir John's face checked him, and he made haste to dismiss the young woman, but in a kindly manner that sent her off with tears in her eyes, grateful and pleasant tears.

"Upon my word," said Sir John, leaning back in his chair, and smoothing the ribands of his doublet. "This hermit life of yours has its bright side—this pretty maiden, for instance, who flashes in upon us and away like some wondering sunbeam."

"She is married, I am told, and has been for several years," replied Bowdon, calmly; "she has probably just arrived on a visit to her aunt. It is many years since I have seen her."

"Married, is she," was the careless rejoinder—"well, her husband is a fortunate man." Sir John went on cracking his filberts; after a little he managed by a few adroit sentences to bring back the conversation to the point which they had left before Eunice came in.

"This young woman is beautiful—very, but how unlike the Heavenly loveliness of the young creature you rescued from the waves," he said; "a sunbeam and the soft moonlight are not more dissimilar."

"Oh, yes," said Bowdon, with some animation, "Eunice was always pretty as a child; but in Francesca's beauty there was something holy!"

"There *was*!—why is she not the same yet?" said Sir John.

"I fear that she is dead!" was the brief reply, and Lord Bowdon arose that his guest might not see the anguish but too visible upon his face.

"Dead!" repeated Sir John; and, strange to say, his face was ashy pale also. "How did it happen?" he questioned, after a moment of painful silence.

"You remember," said Bowdon, making a strong effort to master the emotions that Francesca's name always aroused—"you remember that this young girl and her brother were absent from their apartments on the day you left Bowdon."

"Yes, but you thought it was but for a walk in the grounds, she was often in the shrubberies; I saw her once or twice with Rochley!"

"She never came back!" said Bowdon, in a hoarse voice.

"And did no one see her after that morning?"

"No one; the grass was trampled around her mother's grave, and that was all the trace we ever found of them."

"And did you search beyond the castle?"

Lord Bowdon smiled mournfully at the question.

"For three months," he said, "I and all my people scoured the country. They must have fallen from the rocks into the channel!"

Sir John still continued pale; and his face bore marks of keen disappointment: feelings deeper and more selfish than mere sympathy were evidently at work in his bosom. For some minutes he was lost in thought, then some new idea seemed to strike him; he spoke abruptly, and in a tone that aroused Lord Bowdon, who had likewise sunk into a train of mournful thought.

"This happened on the day we left Bowdon. Did Lord Rochley know of it?"

"Not then; but I informed him by letter some weeks after."

"And he never mentioned it to me, but spoke of the young girl as if she were still at Bowdon—as if her fascinations kept you here! My lord there is something wrong in this!"

"Wrong—how?"

"The young lady is not dead!"

"I wish you could convince me of it!" said Bowdon, with a sad smile.

"Rochley has been at the bottom of her disappearance: he has persuaded her away. Several times I saw him in the grounds conversing with her—once she was crying—again I saw her hands clasped before him as if urging some petition—he is answerable for her disappearance!"

"You do not know Francesca: no angel is more pure than she is!" said Bowdon, with animation.

"This thing could not have been!—Heaven forbid!"

"Amen!" answered Sir John, thrusting aside his plate, and beginning to pace the room much agitated. "Amen, with all my heart! but I will see Rochley before the year is a week older. If harm has fallen upon the girl, and by his aid, the very fiends are more to be envied than he."

Bowdon was surprised by the young baronet's vehemence. Every moment he became more and more excited; his dark eyes glowed beneath their black lashes; a frown knitted the smooth breadth of his forehead; his step was planted firmly upon the carpet, and he fiercely plucked away the knots of riband on his doublet as he paced to and fro.

"Sir John this agitation seems strange!" said Bowdon, excited, by these exhibitions of deep feeling—"what interest can you take in the fate of this young girl that should move you thus?"

"Bowdon," said Sir John, stopping short, "tell me, did you ever think of making Francesca your wife?" Bowdon shrunk back as if with a sharp pang, and his face grew very pale.

"You know that my hand is pledged."

"To whom?—to whom? I would know to whom?" was the passionate rejoinder.

"I have never seen the lady, nor do I know her name; she is one selected by the king and my father. I am pledged only to marry when King Charles shall claim my hand for the person whom my father has chosen."

"Then you could not have married Francesca?"

"I could not!"

"And you did not love her!"

"Sir John—Sir John!" cried Bowdon, in a voice which bespoke all the surprise and pain he felt.

"I see you loved, but would not marry her; and I without love *will* marry her if she is upon the face of the earth."

"This is sacrilege—this is terrible—Francesca is dead," cried Lord Bowdon, arising.

"To-morrow we will talk of this further," said the baronet, checking the fierce excitement under which he had spoken; "now, I pray you, let some one show me a chamber. This news has shaken me sorely," and the young men parted. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 227.

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CHAPTER XIII.

She is not dead!—she is not dead!

Hope, like a little rosy child,
Came stealing softly to his bed,
And in his tranquil sleep he smiled.

LORD BOWDON did not sleep that night. The very doubt of Francesca's death, which Sir John Payton had so painfully aroused, was enough to keep him in a state of keen excitement. Sometimes he would cast himself on the great high-posted bed in his chamber, and strive to lull himself into slumber by watching the white plumes that crested each fluted post as they waved softly in the lamp-light. Then he would spring up and walk the spacious chamber, or seek for air on the balcony beneath his window—the very balcony from which he had seen Francesca on the last night of her stay at the castle. The slender sapling against which she had leaned, swayed with a soft and almost solemn motion in the night breeze. The scent of damp blossoms floated around him, and from the distance he saw, with a heavy heart, the window of Francesca's bower-room dark as his own hopes, save when a flash of moonlight now and then fell across them through the waving branches.

"Poor child; oh, my God, what can have happened to her. If it be true that she is not dead—where is she?—where is that sweet boy, with his eyes that spoke more living language than ever fell from an ordinary tongue? My poor little nestless birds, to what hollow have they been chased?"

As these thoughts sprang to his mind, troubling the gloom that had become habitual to it, Lord Bowdon chanced to lift his eyes to the window of a chamber to which Sir John Payton had retired. He was surprised to see a light beaming through the casement, flooding the purple velvet curtains with broad waves of crimson, as if more than one taper blazed close behind the drapery. It was after three in the morning, and this glare of light struck Lord Bowdon as something rather singular, particularly as his guest had complained so bitterly of fatigue before retiring to his room. As his eyes were still lifted to the window, the whole mass of heavy drapery was flung aside, and the casement softly opened as if to admit air. Lord Bowdon started, for Sir John Payton, in full dress as he had left the supper-table, leaned from the casement as if to inhale a breath of the fresh morning. During perhaps five minutes he bent over the heavy stone window sill, leaning upon his folded

arms. Then he drew back, partially closed the casement, and seated himself by a table, which, with two wax lights half burned down in their tall, silver candlesticks, had been drawn into the window recess.

With a sort of vague curiosity, Lord Bowdon watched the singular movements of his guest—singular from the lateness of the hour, and the somewhat indolent habits usual to the young baronet. Papers were scattered about the table, some folded, others open, but falling together again like old letters that had been long pressed in some confined space. Beneath one of the tall candles Lord Bowdon could just detect the glitter of a casket, into which Sir John carefully placed the papers after they were read—folding them with great accuracy, and at times casting his eyes about the chamber as if fearful, even at that late hour, that some one might steal, unawares, upon him, and witness his occupation.

When the papers were all deposited in the casket, Sir John took from the table what appeared to be either a locket or a miniature, for it glittered in his hand, and a long chain, composed of many heavy links, each riveted, if he might judge by the flash, with some rare jewel, dragged half across the table, and, being gathered up in a handful, was pressed down upon the papers. After this, Sir John closed the casket, and sat with his hand upon the lid, evidently lost in thought. The light, as it shone upon his handsome features, revealed them divested of all their rich bloom, and with the unusual pallor was mingled a look of keen anxiety. Whatever that casket might contain, it certainly gave Sir John Payton subject for deep and harrowing thought. He slowly withdrew his hand from the casket, and seemed about to fasten the spring, when something on the table attracted his attention. It appeared to be a very small parcel done up in silver paper; he unfolded it, and slowly raised the contents between his thumb and finger. It was a long ringlet of chestnut brown hair that fell from his hand wave after wave, till several of the rich rings with their soft gold tinge lay upon the table. This tress of hair must have been a new discovery to Sir John, for he examined it with great eagerness, smoothed out the curl with his fingers, and drew the whole tress tightly across his hands, as if he were minutely examining the texture. After this he allowed the tress to drop upon the table, and took from the same paper something, that from the distance seemed a lock of short and coal black hair, for it glittered like jet in the candle-light; and this too Sir John examined

with keener attention than he had bestowed upon the warmer and more beautiful ringlet. His lips, before so fixed and anxious in their expression, broke into a triumphant smile; and he folded the hair softly between his two palms, and allowing his face to drop upon them, seemed to laugh inwardly. During ten minutes, perhaps, Sir John remained thus with his forehead bent, and his hands clasped; then he folded up the two tresses of hair, and locking the casket, left the window.

Lord Bowdon, without the slightest intention of acting as a spy upon his guest, had witnessed this scene at first with that sort of vague unconsciousness peculiar to the unblabby, and afterward aroused to more decided interest by connecting this dumb show with the conversation which he had held with Sir John that evening.

With all his faculties morbidly aroused, Lord Bowdon could not help connecting this sudden visit, and this night vigil with the strange interest for the lost orphans manifested in Payton's conversation. It opened a new chain of conjecture to him. It tortured his noble soul with doubt. He longed at once to enter his guest's chamber, and demand the reason of his sudden interest in the fate of Francesca.

All at once the words that Payton had uttered on retiring, fell upon Bowdon's memory like a flash of fire—"I, *without love*, will marry her if she is on the face of the earth."

At the time, this speech had merely shocked Lord Bowdon, believing Francesca no more—he felt it as an outrage to the dead—but now it broke upon him in another sense, he felt that there was some secret unknown to him connected with the children whom he had saved and lost. The belief began to dawn in his mind that they might be alive, and that his guest by some possibility had got a clue to their existence.

Filled with these conflicting doubts, it is not wonderful that the master of Bowdon sought his couch no more that night, the very faculty of rest seemed driven from him. Francesca alive—Francesca the bride of another—the bride of Sir John Payton, who *without love* would marry her—there was something keener and more powerful than mere anguish in the idea. To him it would have been much better that this young girl, with all her genius and her beauty, should have been buried in the waves than cast into the arms of a man who had thus deliberately proclaimed his indifference, and in the same breath his determination to make the young creature his wife. Francesca a being all impulse, all feeling, wedded, and yet unloved! The thought stung him like an adder. The night before he had fully believed Francesca dead; now he scarcely had a doubt that she was alive, and in some great peril. Lord Rochley, that shrewd old courtier, that case-hardened man of the world, *could* he have been instrumental in persuading the young girl away? Amid all these conflicting thoughts Bowdon had no doubt of Francesca, there was something so open, so pure in every thought and look of that young girl, that it would have been a sacrilege to suspect her face an instant of anything that was not upright. Beside the love of a man like Bowdon, is itself so noble that it sends greatness to everything it

shines upon. For the time he forgot everything connected with himself in the depth of thought which the events of that night had cost him. His great wish was to find those two orphan children, and protect them with his whole power; nay, his very life if that were needful. His step, hitherto so listless and sad, grew vigorous, as with folded arms and many a high thought passing over his features, he paced up and down the balcony.

The light in Sir John Payton's room blazed redly through the curtains a full hour after Lord Bowdon had ceased to regard it. Suddenly the crimson glow went out, and all around that portion of the castle was black as midnight.

Daylight found Lord Bowdon in the open air, stretched at length upon a stone bench beneath his chamber window; he lay with closed eyes, but still awake and thoughtful. Many a rare old vine was wreathed around the stone-work of the balcony, and a curtain of ivy fell downward almost to the ground, shielding the young lord from observation, and only allowing a stray beam of the rosy morning now and then to penetrate to his hard couch. After a night of the tumultuous agitation we have described, he might have been expected to look harrassed and dejected, but it was not so. The very idea that Francesca lived, and might require his protection, had been enough to kindle all the generous strength of his nature. The look of mournful depression stamped on his pale face the day before, had entirely disappeared; and as he lay stretched upon that hard slab of rock, there was in his attitude and on his features the warrior stamp that lives rather in a strong spirit than in the strong hand. The sun was up, and a troupe of light-winged birds were darting in and out through the ivy, making the dark green leaves shiver beneath their fluttering wings, and the wild gush of their matin song. But Lord Bowdon lay perfectly quiet; his arm folded beneath his head, and a smile hovering around his mouth. He had fallen asleep with the first sweet sound of the birds, and was now dreaming of Francesca—dreaming that the music which made the fresh air tremble around him, was her voice, grown rich and strong with the tears she had shed since leaving Bowdon Castle. All at once there seemed to be a discord in the notes—something that broke up this flow of delicious music, and disturbed the sweet delirium of his dream.

Bowdon started up; a human voice arose from beneath the balcony on which he had been sleeping. It was this which had broken his dream. He arose and sat upright; his fine hair disheveled by the wind, and with a slight glow upon his cheek, such as had not visited it for many a long month. While turning to pass into his chamber he saw, through the interstices of the vines, the fair form of Eunice Bruce gathering flowers from the shrubbery near his window. She was singing merrily at her task, and seemed to find pleasure in frightening the birds away from the rose-bushes that she wished to plunder.

The cheerful little woman had already more than half filled her white apron with blossoms; she must have been sometime out of doors, for the edge of her crimson skirt were wetted deep by a passage through

the moist shrubs, and her dimpled arms down to the taper fingers were dripping with dew, which she shook gracefully off from time to time, after plunging them deep into the drop-laden bushes in her eagerness after some choice flower that was sure to bury itself far down in the leaves. She sang

I am roaming 'mid the roses;
I am singing to the flowers;
Where the honey bee reposes
Through the dark and dewy hours.
I am searching for the columbines
That sleep within the grass,
And shake the blushing eglantines
That tremble as I pass!
I am roaming—I am roaming!

Pretty Eunice broke off her song with a start and a faint scream. A branch of flowing eglantine which she had raised herself on tiptoe to reach, was grasped suddenly and dragged down with a violence that made the whole bush tremble.

"Oh, John Bruce—John Bruce—is that you coming through the bushes like my aunt's grey cat as she steals through the pantry?" cried the little woman, with a forced laugh, and crimsoning to her temples. "How could you frighten me so! See you have made me drop one corner of my apron, and here are all the flowers that I have plucked for our young lord's breakfast-table trembling about my feet."

"So much the better!" replied the cold, measured voice of the Puritan; and going up to his wife, John Bruce planted his heavy shoe directly upon a superb cluster of roses which Eunice was just stooping to replace in her apron: "so much the better," he repeated, with a grim smile. "What has Eunice, the wife of John Bruce, to do with vain and foolish things like these?"

"Vain and foolish! What! the beautiful flowers which God himself has planted in the earth. That he bathes with his own sunshine, and washes with sweet dew before he puts them to sleep at night! Just bend your head, John Bruce, draw in a deep breath, here over this corner of my apron where the honeysuckle and sweet-briar are thickest, then say if you can that things that God has made so beautiful are vain or foolish!"

Eunice lifted up one hand as she spoke, and burying it in the short, black hair which was cut trimly around the base of her husband's massive head, she put forth some gentle force in burying his face low enough to inhale the rich odor that arose from her apron.

"Now say aught against my flowers if you can!" she cried, as Bruce forced his head free from her damp hand, and shook off the drops it had left in his hair like a half angry mastiff.

"They are like everything else in this sinful place, pleasant enough to the eye, but dust and ashes in the mouth," he said, still grinding the bunch of roses into the earth with his foot. "What but these painted things could have put the light and carol words of a song into thy lips, Eunice Bruce?"

"Light and carol! Nay, nay, John, this is too harsh. It was no song, only the thoughts that came to me with the flowers; I never heard them before, and

could not remember them again if my life depended on it."

"Why could you not have lifted your voice in a psalm, such as the godly have tried in vain to teach those stubborn lips in the congregation?" cried Bruce, solemnly. "It is not substantial and wholesome gospel words which ever come first to thy lips, Eunice."

"I am sure," said Eunice, with a look of demure contrition, "I have tried my best to learn all the psalms, but I never could learn how to sing through my nose without laughing, and that you know, John, would have been a shame and a scandal!"

John Bruce groaned from the bottom of his ample chest.

"Oh, Eunice, Eunice, how long shall I toil in spirit and wrestle with Satan to snatch thee as a brand from the burning; for a season I did think that communion with the godly, and the wholesome admonitions which, as a faithful shepherd spared not to thee morning or night, was at last winning thee like a ewe lamb into the fold; but lo! the moment we enter these ungodly walls and the old levan breaks out. Thy face is covered with sinful smiles; light songs profane thy lips; even the hair of thy head has become rebellious. Behold!"

Eunice had left her ungainly hat in the house; a white kerchief knotted under her chin, but half concealed the rich luxuriance of her hair which, alas, had broken partially loose, and fell in two or three waving curls over her shoulders. As John Bruce closed his harangue, he took one of these unfortunate ringlets between his thumb and finger, and held it up till the morning sunshine flashed through and through the rich brown, weaving it with lustrous gold.

"I could not help it. Indeed I did not know that the knot was loose!" cried poor Eunice, hastily tucking the stray curls under her kerchief, and blushing with shame and vexation beneath the cold eyes of her husband.

"Eunice!" said John Bruce; "once, yea and again have I struggled to wrench the old serpent from thy bosom, and leave there only that which is sweet to the taste, as honey in the honey-comb. When shall my spirit cease to wrestle for thee?"

"What have I done? Why are you offended with me?" cried poor Eunice, harassed till the tears started to her eyes. "I am glad to see my aunt; I am happy to be let loose among these flowers again: it brings back the time when I was a child, and used to run out here with my young lord till we almost lived in the thickets, like the birds that you hear singing. Those were pleasant times, John, and I love to think of them. There is nothing wrong or wicked in it!"

John Bruce shook his head.

"Come, come!" cried Eunice, lifting up her hand with a playful caress, and folding his broad chin in the rosy palm, "give up this grave humor for one day, and let us be happy."

It was not in human nature to resist entirely the sweet and graceful feeling that lighted up that young face. John Bruce was a bigot, and though by no means deficient in intellect, his sense was of that hard, dry kind, which is only softened into an approach to tenderness by a world of patient affection such as his little wife really felt. Eunice saw by the

expression of his eyes that began to light up like those of a New Foundland dog when he is caressed, that his lecture of the morning was about to close, and gathering up her apron in one hand, she put the other coaxingly through her husband's arm, and taking two dainty little steps to each of his broad strides, threaded her way to the great hall.

Pretty Eunice Bruce quite innocently disturbed more inmates of the castle than she had imagined, while on her plundering excursion in the garden. Lord Bowdon, whom she had aroused from one of the sweetest dreams that ever visited a weary heart, had merely given a passing kindly thought to her cheerfulness and beauty as he passed into his own chamber. But scarcely had he disappeared, when the casement of Sir John Payton's room was softly opened, and the young baronet, wrapped in a rich brocade dressing-gown, and evidently just aroused from his first sleep, seated himself in the opening and listened, unscen, to the sweet melody of her little impromptu song as it arose, like the sudden trill of a nightingale, wild and sweet from the thickets. He could now and then catch a glimpse of her face as she moved lightly from bush to bush; and two or three times he saw one of those truant curls lifted from her shoulder by the breeze, and carried lightly out to the sunshine. In the voice and in the figure of this young woman there was something so fresh and piquant, that for his life Sir John could not forbear watching her movements. He even began to calculate the time necessary for making his toilet, half designing to go down to the garden and surprise her in the midst of her graceful work. But while rising to summon his man, Sir John saw Bruce moving deliberately through the thickets, as if he too had been wrought into unusual exertion by the voice that was still rising cheerily through the leaves. Then Sir John remembered what Bowdon had told him the evening before regarding this bright creature. He felt at once with a sensation of instinctive dislike that this man, with his heavy brow and slated look, was the husband of the songstress who had fascinated him alike by her beauty and her voice. He watched Bruce approach the young creature, and a thrill of hatred ran through his veins as he saw that heavy foot crushing down the flowers she had dropped. He longed to spring from the window and chastise the solemn rudeness of this act. Their voices, and occasionally a few words of the conversation between Bruce and his wife, reached Sir John. He saw the start with which Eunice greeted her husband; the pleading look; the crimson that rushed over her face: and at last he knew by her downcast attitude, and the desponding air with which her arms fell down, that the young woman was weeping or ready to weep.

It was strange, the keen interest with which Sir John regarded this scene: his vivid imagination was completely aroused by it. He began to fancy all sorts of vague and improbable things regarding this young woman, her history and her feelings. From the first moment his mind was positively made up on one point. A creature so fresh, so cheerful, so replete with gentle and natural grace, could not love the dull, prosing Roundhead by her side. Still this conviction

did not prevent his white teeth setting hard together, and something very like an imprecation hissing through as Eunice walked away, with her pretty hand resting so contentedly on the sad colored sleeve of her husband's doublet.

Sir John started up, and dashed the velvet curtain over the window with a feverish jerk. He spent more than usual time that morning at his toilet, wearying his man by constantly changing his fancy with regard to some article in dress, and in every way exhibiting a mind ill at ease.

When Payton descended to breakfast, he found Lord Bowdon in the saloon waiting for his guest. There was little in his appearance to indicate the night of disquietude which he had passed; the mournful solitude that had marked his countenance was quite grave. He was grave and firm, but met his guest courteously.

"I trust that you have rested well, Sir John," he said, quietly taking his seat at the table.

"Oh, yes, I slept like a dormouse, notwithstanding that little excitement about your ship-wrecked Syrian. Your wine is too old or too strong, Bowdon; it must have made me talk a great deal of nonsense," replied the young baronet, with an attempt at careless indifference that sat awkwardly enough upon him.

"It did not appear to me that you were affected by the wine last night," replied Bowdon, looking earnestly upon his guest.

"What else could have set me talking so like a fool about that poor little girl, who is this moment no doubt fathoms deep in yon treacherous channel; she was just the creature to fling herself from a precipice if anything chanced to go wrong with her. Rochley fancied that you were kept out of the world by her pretty wiles, and so I ran down to disenchant you and disenchant the old castle. I expected difficulty of course; but now that the charmer is dead, and you all alone and so dismal, I have but to settle myself for a day or two, and bear your sombre humor company."

"I had half made up mind to bear you company up to town," said Lord Bowdon.

"Oh, the town is dull as a conventicle just now; and this place is really enchanting, we must not think of leaving it till your roses and honeysuckles are out of blossom. Upon my word, the sight of them this morning made me absolutely pastoral."

Lord Bowdon was surprised at the quiet way in which his friend arranged matters for himself; he was not prepared for the capricious change which seemed to have come upon him since the last night. The vague hopes occasioned by Payton's words and manner regarding Francesca died in his bosom. Probably Sir John was affected by the wine, and really knew nothing whatever about the fate of this singular girl; his conjectures that she was still alive had no foundation, save in an overheated brain. How heavy and sad grew Lord Bowdon's heart as this conviction fastened upon it. Once more he had nothing to hope for—nothing that could exact an effort from him; he arose from the table the same depressed, heart-stricken man that he had been for months.

Bowdon had scarcely tasted the breakfast, and had not observed anything upon the table; neither did his

guest exhibit much appetite, but his powers of observation were keen, and from time to time his eyes roved toward a large crystal vase crowded with flowers that occupied the centre of the table. This vase might well have attracted the admiration of a mind free enough to be pleased with such trifles. The blossoms were yet twinkling with dew, and arranged even with artistical skill. Strong contrasts softening away into delicate harmony, bespoke a degree of taste which if uncultured, amounted to absolute genius; a painter could not have settled that moss of blossoms with more exquisite effect. The butler took up the vase, and was about to remove it with the plate and viands, but Payton touched his arm.

"My good fellow, take the flowers to my room; and—and say to the person who arranged them that I should like to have a vase on my dressing-table every morning while I stay at the castle."

There was a glow upon Payton's face as he gave these directions, that might have attracted Lord Bowdon's notice, but he was looking from the window pre-occupied, and incapable of marking the trifles that passed around him.

The butler bowed and went away with the vase. Every morning during the next ten days Sir John Payton's dressing-room was fragrant with fresh flowers; but though Eunice Bruce gathered them in their dew, the light song that had sprung from her lips like the carol of a bird the first two mornings, was after that hushed forever. Was she afraid that it might arouse her husband, and thus bring a lecture longer than a sermon upon her? Or at the bottom of her innocent heart did there slumber a thought that Sir John Payton was listening for this sweet signal, that he might surprise her in the grounds? Poor little Eunice, she had nothing but a pure heart and honest motives to shield her from harm.

CHAPTER XIV.

It seemed as if Sir John Payton was determined to outrage all the previous indolent habits of his life by early rising while at Bowdon Castle. Every morning before the sun was up the young baronet, arrayed in some elegant morning costume, might have been detected hovering about the windows of his chamber. Constantly agitating the voluminous curtains, and sometimes even leaning forth with a sort of reckless daring of observation to reconnoitre the grounds.

One morning, after he had been nearly an hour upon watch, the sight of a crimson kirtle and a long blue scarf gleaming through the shrubbery at a distance, brought him into the open air. He was hurrying along one of the terraces, with the point lace and rose colored ribands attached to his dress fluttering to the breeze, which his long curls perfumed with every step, when he encountered John Bruce, evidently bent upon the same course with himself. The Puritan took off his high crowned hat, and stood still as the young baronet approached, regarding him with a calm, leaden expression of the eye, that to an excitable person like Sir John was peculiarly annoying. Two or three times had this man placed himself thus in the way of Lord Bowdon's guest, as if desirous of

speaking to him. But some inward consciousness had always caused the young baronet to pass abruptly by, avoiding if possible even the immovable glance with which he was regarded. This morning, however, the Puritan seemed resolved to claim attention, for as the baronet came up he advanced gravely to meet him.

"Well, my good friend, do you wish to speak with me?" said Sir John, with that gentlemanly ease peculiar to high birth and breeding, and which no degree of embarrassment could entirely obscure.

"Yes," replied John Bruce, measuring off his words with a solemn accent, and holding his steeple crowned hat upright between both hands, where it towered against his breast like a pyramid.

"I have tarried at the castle a week; yea, nearly two, in order to gain speech with my lord regarding Bethna, the place of my inheritance, which the ungodly man Charles Stuart threatens to wrest from me."

"Oh, is that it," said Sir John, drawing a deep breath; "well, my solemn friend, regarding this inheritance, this Bethna, how can I help you?"

"I am told by Dame Weld, a worldly wise, but sensible woman according to her light, that thou hast power and influence over this man Charles. A word fitly spoken may save to John Bruce his inheritance, per-adventure thou wilt speak that word."

Sir John bent his glance to the earth, and pressing his full lips together, indulged in a moment of deep thought. When he lifted his eyes again there was a faint sparkle in them; some pleasant idea had evidently crept into his mind. With that delicate craft only to be obtained by contact with the world, he began gently to coquet with the anxiety so visible in the solemn face of the Puritan.

"But Lord Bowdon, he has influence at court; why not ask his aid?"

"There hath that passed when I had charge of this castle and estate under the Lord Protector, which makes me loth to ask aid or counsel from the lord of Bowdon."

"And so old Noll left you in charge of this noble mill, ha; and I suppose half the grist went into your coffer."

"Nay, surely the servant is worthy of his hire!"

"Undoubtedly, Master Bruce; nothing can be more reasonable. So, with this just hire, you purchased Bethna; is it not so?"

"Nay, Bethna was the captive of my bow and spear, as well as my inheritance; he that once owned it was a rank royalist; a seditious and ungodly man."

"I understand; a unhappy royalist lived upon some small estate, which was coveted by Master Bruce, who informed against him."

"Nay, I did but point out his dwelling to the troopers when they come down to Cornwall in search of seditious persons!"

"Oh, that was all!" exclaimed Sir John, laughing. "Well, what happened to the owner at Bethna? Did old Noll give him a trial or a rough halter?"

"The man was old; and the trooper that had him strapped to his couper rode hard."

"Well!"

"Somehow when the company halted to refresh

themselves, the old man was hanging across the crouper; his head on one side of the horse; his feet on the other; he left no son, and I was his next heir!"

"So this poor old royalist was your kinsman!"

"According to the flesh he was the brother of my grandfather."

Sir John Payton turned from the Puritan with a feeling of disgust, which superseded for the moment all thoughts of his own selfish objects; but after a moment's reflection he—like too many in the world—began to look upon the treachery and hard-heartedness of this man as an excuse for the evil which his own heart was secretly meditating. It suited his purposes well to aid John Bruce in retaining his ill-gotten estate; but in order to further his own wishes, the first step to be taken was that of persuading the Puritan up to London with his wife. The subject required some reflection, and Sir John paced the terrace once or twice while revolving it in his mind. Bruce stood in his place, firmly holding on to his steeple-crowned hat, and following the young baronet with a cold and patient look.

"I have been thinking over this business," said the baronet, coming slowly up. "True, I have some influence with his majesty, which shall be yours; but your safest way will be through your wife!"

"What, Eunice; nay, what could she do?"

"She would win favor at court which the highest noble of the land might fail in obtaining."

"What, Eunice, whom I had hoped to make a

mother in Israel. Little Eunice go up to that place of sin to be gazed upon by the man Charles."

"Not so," said Sir John, startled by the solemn vehemence of the Roundhead; and judging correctly that all his plan was in peril! "It is to the queen, one of the sweetest and most virtuous ladies in England, to whom your wife should present herself."

"Truly there is reason in this," muttered John Bruce, after pondering over the idea heavily in his mind. "Eunice is comely and fair to look upon; per-adventure she may find grace in the eyes of this Catholic woman, and thus save my home, even Bethna from the hands of the spoiler."

"Nothing can be more certain," said Sir John, repressing a smile which the solemn language of this man was constantly provoking.

"Then will I turn my face homeward this day and prepare for the journey," said John Bruce, wheeling deliberately around and moving away.

"And I," said Sir John, with a low laugh, "will at the same time quit this stupid place; I can but marvel that even her rosy cheek could have kept me here so long. By my Lady Venus and all her train, this is unhoped for good fortune. There goes the little charmer flitting through the rose-bushes like a butterfly, and here am I following with half a score of heart-breaking adieus on my lip."

That night John Bruce had returned to Bethna with his wife; and Sir John Payton was several stages on his road to London.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 36.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER XV.

There was revel in the palace;
There was music in the hall;
And many a noble cavalier
Shone at the kingly ball.
And high born ladies gather'd where
The merry monarch stood,
Each vicing, in her loveliness,
To charm his idle mood.
But many hearts grew lone and sad,
Amid this regal mirth,
As night shade finds a darksome life
Where brightest flowers have birth!

SUMMER had enriched herself, and grown ruddy with the spoils of spring, and yet our merry monarch lingered at Hampton Court. With all his follies there was a good deal of shrewd calculation about the character of Charles, and perhaps he felt that the scenes of strife that were already every day occurrences in the royal household, had better take place away from the quiet city. The common people were disposed to look upon the evident unhappiness of their queen with more of sympathy than she received from the careless nobles that could afford to live about the court, where the monarch chose to seek the partial retirement of his favorite palace. Charles was perfectly aware of this, and so delayed from week to week his expected return to White Hall; and the month of roses found him still surrounded by the green leaves and pleasant shades of the country.

As if to blind perverted humanity with the most beautiful things in nature, the Countess of Castlemain and the blossoms of June knew birth together, and when that lovely month was steeped in fragrant bloom she insisted that—like the Queen of England—her birth-day should be celebrated with regal splendor, and in the very palace of the king which her presence had so long desecrated.

This audacious request her monarch slave had no resolution to deny, he only ventured to require that the fete should not openly be given in her name, urging as a reason that the queen could not be persuaded to preside, and without her countenance few ladies of the court would lend their presence at the festival. With this compromise the haughty woman was for her own sake obliged to be content, so the preparations for a fete of more than regal splendor were commenced at Hampton Court.

During several weeks Charles had been absent with some of his favorite nobles, on an excursion to the

inland districts of his kingdom; while the queen held her court at Hampton. Thus it chanced that Francesca, who seldom went beyond the chamber of her royal mistress, had never encountered the monarch. It had happened thus with Guilo likewise, for with a sort of quiet obstinacy the lad could seldom be persuaded to undertake any of the frivolous duties hitherto imposed on the Countess of Castlemain's pages. With that intuitive appreciation of the true and good which was so lovely a trait in his character, Guilo shrunk from the bold caresses and careless benevolence of his mistress. Never did her white hand pass over his curls—never did she stoop to kiss his brow with her warm, red lips, for such caresses she was in the habit of bestowing alike upon her pages and her pet dogs—but a shadow not of disgust—Guilo was at once too good and too child-like for a feeling that presupposes some knowledge of wrong—but of some subtle intuition more spirited and repelling than disgust, would pass over his beautiful features. He shrunk from that capricious fondness that she lavished even more profusely upon her spaniels, with a faint shudder such as may be supposed to thrill a child's bosom when the serpent glides by.

Perhaps it was this very intractability that enchanted the pampered countess. The novelty of opposition to a woman always approached with bent knee and cringing spirits, was in itself delightfully exciting. Like most tyrants, she was ready to become the slave of anything feeble enough to excite interest without arousing the pride which was her familiar demon: strange as it may seem, the very coldness with which Guilo received her attempts to load him with kindness, made him more and more a favorite. This was the little pleasant drop of acid that gave pungency to a cup whose very sweetness had something bitter in it. The countess took a lively and not altogether ungenerous interest in this child, so cold, so unimpressible where she was concerned—so full of wild and impassioned feeling, did he catch but a glimpse of his sister through the palace windows along the vista of those regal apartments. In vain this woman usually so regardless of others, strove to win the child's affection. She permitted him to retain his pretty Italian garments, but would have loaded them with gold and jewels, all of which he rejected with a sweet and calm smile. She would have tempted his appetite with dainties from far off climes, such as monarchs only could command; but bread, a little fruit, and a cup of milk was enough for Guilo. Grapes that

reminded him of the Italian vines that he had played under with Francesca; olives such as they had plucked from the trees back of his mother's dwelling. The child craved the fruit of no other clime; his appetites were pure and simple as his heart. Not even the pampered and false taste of that powerful woman could pervert either.

And Francesca, how solitary she would have been amid all that regal splendor but for the love of her mistress—love which she returned with energy and warmth that was the one ray of sunshine which never faded from the clouded path of that sweet and neglected woman! Francesca sought no companionship. Sad and mournful like her royal lady, she loved the solitude of those apartments in which Catharine spent most of her time. She loved to sit at the queen's feet, and with her lute and her matchless voice, charm away the gloom to which that young wife was fast yielding herself. At night, when all her ladies in waiting had retired, those in the ante-room might have heard the sweet voice of this young girl reading some of her own Italian poets, or breaking into the low cadences of a song that often brought soothing and slumber to eyes that without her would have been open and wet with tears.

Thus these two orphan children had lived since they first entered the palace of King Charles. Now the time of this festival had arrived—a birth-day festival in everything but the name, and far more brilliant than any of the bridal rejoicings that had welcomed Catharine of Braganza to the shores of old England.

To all but the unhappy young queen the object of this festival was well understood, but, in the midst of her court, Catharine lived much alone. Some were careless, others averse to the trouble of informing her, and so it happened that alone of the whole court Catharine never suspected that she, the Queen of England, was called upon to preside at a fete given in honor of a woman whose birth had been the greatest and most bitter sorrow of her life.

Catharine was in her dressing-room, surrounded by half a dozen ladies in waiting, all of whom were attending her with a sort of negligent impatience of the duty, upon the somewhat tedious progress of a regal toilet. Charles had just returned to his court, and the joy of seeing him, the renewed hope that even yet she might win back his love, gave brilliancy and life to her countenance. This alone was wanting to render her most attractive to a man like Charles, who was never known to admire the soft and pensive shade which grief was rendering habitual to her countenance. That evening the ladies around her were in high spirits, with anticipation of the night's amusement; Catharine caught something of their brilliant glee, and many a smile brightened her mouth, while, with witty jests and gay repartee, the high born tiring women wreathed her hair with jewels, and smoothed the folds of lustrous silk around her person. She did not observe that there was occasionally a tinge of mischief in what they said, and that a witty gibe was sometimes followed by significant looks that pointed too broadly to her own august person, or to some portion of her array. But Francesca, who sat on a

low stool at her feet—for the young creature had, by the indulgence of her mistress, never been taught the tiresome etiquette which the high born ladies of honor were obliged to maintain—Francesca, keen-eyed by affection, saw it all. She could not understand why those ladies should studiously render their royal mistress unbecoming in her array, but she felt that such was the fact—that they were overloading her dark hair with ornaments, and that the color of her garments was sure to render her olive complexion still more swarthy than her native sun had left it. She saw too that these high born ladies scarcely sought to conceal the mischief they were doing, but with pointed words and merry glances were slyly enjoying their small treachery.

Francesca's heart swelled with indignation. She felt that some slight, of which her mistress was quite unconscious, had been perpetrated upon her—but her emotion was overlooked by the bevy of lovely traitors. They thought of her no more than of the silken-eared spaniel who shared her cushion at the queen's feet. So they smiled and jested on, while she with her quick intellect was regarding them.

Catharine, who, since she had been persuaded to abandon her native costume, had depended solely upon the taste of her ladies, took no heed of the progress of her toilet; and she understood English so imperfectly that half the conversation was lost upon her. She only knew that the beautiful women grouped around her chair appeared more animated and surly than usual, and her own spirits rose in sympathy with theirs. But her sunny state of mind was of brief duration, for as the last string of gems was twined in the raven braid that fell across her forehead, thus breaking up the calm beauty of that most noble portion, the dressing-room door opened, and Lady Castlemain swept into the room.

Catharine gave a start, and the blood rushed warmly into her cheek. As lady of the bed-chamber the countess had a right to enter the queen's dressing-room, but it was a privilege she never deigned to exercise unless it was to offer some covert insult, or to parade her own majestic beauty before the unhappy wife. Indeed she could hardly offer a greater insult than the presence of that audacious beauty, lighted up as it was before the queen's face by the prodigal munificence of a faithless husband.

Castlemain swept into the room full of insolence, but superb in her masculine beauty. The dark hair was drawn back from her snow white forehead, and was gathered behind like a helmet with its plumes broken and flowing. Downward, in a wavy mass of coal black ringlets—threaded here and there with a string of small diamonds that shone up like flashes of starlight from the black depths—flowed her raven hair. Her brow was surmounted by a broad circle of gems, that by her orders had been so fashioned by the jeweler that it partook more of a regal crown than of a countess' coronet, which alone she had the right to wear. Adown her superb person flowed her robe of amber satin gold, tinted where the light fell on the folds, and almost brown in the shadows. Away from the sloping polish of her snowy shoulders fell this robe, exposing the proud neck, and drawn half

down from the bosom by a rope of great diamonds that passed over her right shoulder and under her left arm, confining by their weight the silken folds to her waist. Free, ample, and with the flow of a Roman garment fell this lustrous robe down to her richly clad feet till it swept the floor, and thus with a low, mocking reverence the Countess of Castlemain presented her shame before the Queen of England.

The indignant blush left Catharine's cheek, a calm and conscious sense of superiority came to her aid: she bent her head gravely, and turning to one of her ladies with quiet dignity, asked if her toilet was not nearly completed. The lady thus addressed cast a triumphant glance first at the head-gear of her royal mistress, and then at the countess, answering with a suppressed smile—

"Oh! yes, your highness, it is perfect!"

"I wonder," said the countess, glancing around the group of ladies—her large, black eyes glowing with malicious merriment: "I wonder your majesty can have patience to remain so long at the toilet!"

A faint crimson came to Catharine's cheek, and lifting her mild, dark eyes to the countess with a look of undisturbed dignity, she answered—

"I have so much need of patience, madam, that this fatigue seems but a trifle."

Lady Castlemain met this gentle reproof with an eye of fire. The cheek that had long since forgotten to crimson at her own shame now flashed red with anger: a taunt trembled on her haughty lip, but she had the grace to subdue it down to a sneering laugh.

"Bring me yon stool, little one," she said, addressing Francesca, and pointing to an embroidered seat that stood a few paces off. "With her majesty's leave I will rest awhile, not possessing her royal strength to endure the fatigues of a state toilet without fatigue."

Francesca did not move. All innocent and unused as she was to the false court that surrounded her, she could not but perceive that something very wrong was transpiring. With the quick eye of love she detected what was passing in the queen's heart, and her brave spirit rose against this strange woman who was so cruelly outraging her gentle benefactress. She did not arise at the haughty behest of the countess, but lifted her soft eyes to the queen with a face that said more plainly than words, "It is here that I obey." Catharine's eye was troubled; and her lips began to tremble; with all her quick and sensitive feelings she was no match for the proud, bad woman, whose very presence overpowered her like the breath of a serpent.

"Child, do you hear: bring me yon seat!" cried the countess, crimsoning with rage.

Francesca met her angry glance, and more angry voice with eyes that sparkled brightly as her own, but from far different feelings.

"None sit in her majesty's presence save those whom she invites to the honor," answered the brave young creature in her sweet broken English. "When the queen desires me, lady, I will bring the seat to you."

The countess turned white with rage and advanced a pace, clenching her white hand, as if she would have struck the orphan. But Catharine laid her hand

on Francesca's head with a motion that was almost a caress, for her heart warmed to the brave girl.

"Nay, Lady Castlemain, you have forgotten the respect due our presence: will it please you to retire?" she said, with gentle dignity.

"I should answer no! but that every moment I remain keeps his majesty waiting in my own poor apartments," replied the insolent woman: "as it is, I humbly take leave!" and with a deep reverence, which had more of irony than respect in it, the countess retired, studiously throwing into her backward steps an air of mock humility that was more insulting than her words.

Wounded and indignant beyond all self-control, Catharine could scarcely suppress her tears as the audacious woman disappeared. She started up—sobs swelling her bosom, and the veins upon her forehead rising to the surface with the great effort that she made to suppress her outraged feelings.

"Come with me," she said, pressing her hand upon Francesca's shoulder—"come with me!"

Francesca arose. The little spaniel left the cushion and stood ready to follow his mistress. The ladies in waiting drew back in a group, and gazed upon each other and upon the queen as she moved toward her closet, leaning upon Francesca.

"This is an outrage! The countess has gone too far," said one of the ladies, as the queen disappeared. "I have been her friend, and will remain so while she contents herself with the droll joke of dressing her majesty like an Eastern idol. But when she breaks in among us, thus defying the poor lady to her face, the thing becomes serious; depend upon it Charles will not sanction all this much longer. Did you see how near she was striking that little Italian singer?"

"Yes, we saw it," answered two of the other ladies at once; "but they say she serves Rowley after a like fashion, so that is nothing."

"She will be in disgrace soon," rejoined a third; "and who knows but the Portuguese lady yonder will be really and truly our mistress after all? I for one begin to think we have been acting against our own interests in rendering the queen the fright we have made her, just to oblige this proud woman, who after all cares for no one but herself."

"This violent temper will be her ruin," rejoined the first speaker; "I was really afraid she would strike the queen."

While this conversation was proceeding in the dressing-room, Catharine entered her closet with Francesca, and, giving way to a burst of indignant grief, paced the room to and fro, wringing her hands and uttering words of passion and reproach against her husband—against the country where insult and wrong had met her at every step, and—more bitterly still—against the vile woman whose rudeness she had just encountered.

From this wild outbreak of feeling Francesca learned how truly her royal mistress was an object of compassion. Her gentle heart burned with indignation that one so generous and so helpless should be so cruelly wronged. These feelings kindled her eyes and parted her sweet lips as she stood by a window gazing upon

the queen, who moved rapidly to and fro—her broad eyelids red with the tears that swelled under them; her dusky cheek stained with passion; and her lips trembling with the bitter anguish that broke through them. The loveliness of the queen—and she was indeed a lovely woman—lay, to a great extent, in the quiet languor and gentle tranquillity of her look and manner. With her features thus stained and distorted, she lost half the attractions natural to her. Francesca felt this—she saw with the keen eye of genius how studiously unbecoming was her dress, and gathering courage from the thought that she alone was permitted to share the grief of her royal mistress, she ventured to approach her.

"My mistress—dear, noble lady," she said, kneeling at Catharine's feet, who paused and regarded her with heavy and tearful eyes, but extended her trembling hand, which the young girl pressed to her lips. "Yield not thus to grief—call forth the lofty patience which fills all who approach you with love and reverence. Forget this rude woman—bring back the bloom and the light to your face—be beautiful as you are good."

"Beautiful! oh, my poor maiden, what in this wide world would I not give for the power of beauty—that—that might win back his love."

"It will—it must!" said Francesca, starting up all in a glow of affectionate hope; "sweet lady, you are beautiful!—only cast aside this passion—smile as you did an hour since. Let me, your little hand maiden, for once strip those tresses of the heavy gems that do but hide the native gloss. Ah, this one night, dear lady, let me be your tire woman; I have seen pictures in my own land that men came from afar to worship almost upon their knees: these pictures had the same raven hair—the same deep, dark eyes, where the soul light seems to tremble up through a well of tears. Lady, dear lady, let me make you like one of these pictures: then go forth to meet the king, your husband, he cannot choose but love you!"

How beautiful was that young face in its loving enthusiasm—how full of genius was the light that sprung into her eyes, rendering them luminous as the sun-kindled amethyst!

Catharine smiled: she drew her hand across her eyes and swept the tears from their inky lashes.

"Be it so, maiden: make me like one of the pictures that men bend the knee to in bright Italy. In my own land, I remember, Catharine was not deemed ungainly or ill-looking; and he—when I was first a bride—" she paused—a bright blush spread over her face, leaving a tremulous smile there when it died away, "he thought none fairer than Catharine then!" she added, and a tear unlike any that had dimmed her eyes that day, gave softness to the light that was just beginning to kindle up their black depths.

"Then I may for this once array the queen after my own fancy!" said Francesca, eagerly throwing open the dressing-room door with that sort of spiritual enthusiasm in her face with which a true artist enters upon the composition of a master-piece. The room was empty; Catharine placed herself in the chair which she had so lately abandoned, and submitted herself to the eager hands of her friend, for notwithstanding the

immense difference between them, the orphan Francesca was in everything a true friend to the Queen of England, and Catharine felt this with all the grateful trust with which the unhappy lean upon the earnest and true. With careless haste, like a child casting aside the wild blossoms of which it has tired, Francesca unwreathed the heavy jewels from the tresses of her mistress, and flung them into the open caskets that stood with their purple cushions exposed upon the toilet. Emeralds, rubies and diamonds dropped from her fingers, and with each cluster fell a long, raven curl adown the shoulders of the queen, till the whole wealth of her hair lay free and wooing about her person in rich and glossy masses.

One string of pearls did that young girl select from the glittering heap which she had cast upon the table; a single string, but pure and white as if they had been frozen in the coldest breath of winter. In and out through the midnight blackness of Catharine's hair she wove this gleaming thread, looping up tress after tress till upon the left temple her thread of gems was exhausted. Then she took from a cup of veined agate that stood upon the table, one of those rare flowers which the English gardeners were just learning to tint with the secrets of agricultural art. The centre was of a deep blood color, shading out to a pale rose till the leaves were edged with silvery white. With this singular blossom she fastened the pearls and lifted up the hair in a backward wave from the temple, leaving the high forehead exposed, but with the shadow of tress and flower stealing softly over it.

Then Francesca took off the blue robe, and in its place she folded a garment of rose tinted satin, and over that an outer dress of the most transparent lace, that floated softly above the glowing folds like mist in the summer mornings. Two or three large brilliants trembled like dew-drops upon the lace wreathed up from her elbows, and a chain of very small diamonds, each kindling in the light like a spark of fire, fell down from her neck and was lost amid the flashing mist of her overdress. According to the fashion of the reign the robe was folded low upon the bosom, but Francesca allowed a wave of the lace to roll softly above the silken outline, thus leaving entirely exposed only the rich swell and slope of a fine neck and shoulders, whose creamy smoothness was shaded by a few stray curls that had been purposely allowed to float away at freedom.

Francesca took a step back and gazed upon her mistress. Her dexterous hands and loving spirit had performed almost fairy work for the young queen. How her eyes sparkled—how her heart beat as she gazed upon this lovely young woman, whose beauty had been so awkwardly clouded half an hour before.

"Look!" she said, turning the toilet mirror upon its silver pedestal, so that Catharine could see her whole person. "See, noble lady, did I not say that you were beautiful? Is she—that cruel woman half so lovely, or so likely to awake love?"

Catharine glanced timidly in the mirror: her eyes lighted up; her cheeks grew damask with pleasant surprise: her lips parted in a smile, and through their dewy crimson shone the edges of her white and even teeth.

Just then when taste, and nature, and warm feeling combined to render the young queen more than beautiful, she heard the footsteps of her husband in the ante-chamber.

"It is he—it is Charles—it is my husband," she said, turning her sparkling eyes upon Francesca, and her whole frame trembled with that sort of joyous terror with which women receive those whose love is the very pulse of their lives, yet of whom they have doubt.

Why was it that Francesca trembled also? Why was it that her face—but a moment before so radiant—turned white as snow? Whence came the strange dread that fell upon her, making the very heart in her bosom thrill as if some one whom she had known long ago and with pain, were approaching? Why, as she heard the king's footstep pause by the door, did she obey an irresistible impulse and glide from the room in silence, torn by contending desires to see and to avoid the monarch? We cannot answer these questions, but such were the singular emotions of Francesca as Charles Stewart drew toward the chamber of his wife.

Catharine stood up leaning one hand upon the toilet table, and unconsciously falling into an attitude peculiarly easy and graceful: her eyes were fixed upon the door: you could see her bosom heave tumultuously beneath its misty lace folds. Love, warm, timid love breathed from every eloquent feature.

Charles entered the room with his usual indolent manner, and looking somewhat weary if not anxious. He had not seen his wife in more than a week, and seemed to have prepared himself to meet her tears and reproaches with becoming philosophy. He did not look toward her as he entered the room, but moved toward an easy chair and sat down, evidently expecting his wife to address him first, and with no very pleasant anticipations of what her address might be. How was he astonished then to find her at his feet: to feel her small hands trembling upon his as she covered it with kisses, and shadowed it with the silken fall of her curls.

"Oh! my lord, you have returned at last!" she said, lifting her face to his. He saw the tremor of her lips, the doubt, the gladness that came and went in her eyes. He marked the heaving of her bosom: the grace of her look and attitude: the exquisite taste of her apparel. He had just left the Countess of Castlemain. The defiant air, her fierce taunts were still vivid upon his mind, for she had met him in all the storm of her passion, becoming more angry and insolent because he would not heap some new contumely upon his innocent wife. The contrast between that mercenary woman and the loving young creature at his feet presented itself forcibly before the monarch, and, for the moment, he felt all the cruelty and injustice of his conduct. How much more beautiful Catharine seemed to him arrayed in her youth and modest affection, than the imperious woman whom he had left. Softened by these thoughts, fascinated as it were by the novel loveliness of her look and attitude, Charles bent over his wife. His dark eye kindled: a smile swept over his swarthy features, and throwing his arms around Catharine's waist, he folded her tenderly to his bosom.

"I am glad—I am rejoiced to meet you thus, my little queen," he said, pressing a kiss upon her glowing neck; "oddsfish, girl, but I did not think you half so pretty before to-night."

Catharine blushed and turned away her head: she trembled to think that he might read all the joy that thrilled her heart while gazing in her eyes. Yet she could not conceal her happiness, she could choose but kiss his hand every other instant, and when he stood up she gazed at him from head to foot with fond admiration. In truth, notwithstanding his dark complexion and heavy features, Charles Stewart was a fine and noble looking man. Powerful in his intellect, and generous in feeling when left to his own nature, he possessed many noble traits of character that could not fail to impress themselves upon his person. But in intellect and in feeling he was indolent to a degree that approached selfishness, and this fault exhibited itself alike in his person and in his manners. Dignified by nature and education, he found the etiquette troublesome with which monarchs usually deem it necessary to hedge in their greatness. He loved gentlemanly freedom rather than kingly state, and depended upon his own quick wit and high bred reserve to secure that personal respect which the most favored of his courtiers never ventured to invade. Thus it was that Charles at a time when the fashion of dress was gay beyond parallel, always appeared the most plainly attired man about court; and on this night, when every room in the palace threatened to be one blaze of jewels, he appeared in a simple dress of black velvet, relieved only by the jeweled garter, and with the insignia of one or two noble orders glittering upon his bosom.

"Come," he said, taking Catharine's hand, and pressing it to his lips before he led her out to the ante-room, which was already crowded with guests. "Look but as lovely in the state drawing-room as you do now, Kate, and not a courtier among them all, from his Grace of Buckingham down, but shall envy his king to-night."

Oh! what subtle things words are, how they can make the heart thrill and the pulse beat, and yet how carelessly are they sometimes spoken.

Francesca was left alone. As if her mute brother knew this by intuition, he came from the loathed apartments of his mistress to spend the precious moments with her. Francesca could hear the sound of the revel, the hum of voices, and the loud burst of music that now and then swelled through the palace. But Guilo saw and heard only her. He sat at her feet with his head upon her lap, and holding her hand beneath his cheek so close that he could feel the pulse rise and fall to the touch of his slender fingers. It was a slow pulse and languid, for even Guilo's presence had failed to arouse her from the singular depression that had fallen upon her spirits when she left the queen's dressing-room. The boy saw that she was sad, and so contented himself with nestling close to her side, without attempting to disturb her thoughts.

They might have been an hour or more in this position, when one of the queen's ladies came into the room in full dress, and flushed with haste.

"Oh! my pretty lutist, here you are half asleep,

and with the candles burning down to nothing," she said, addressing Francesca. "Come—come, arouse yourself, the king has sent for you; her majesty has been talking of your skill on the lute, and he desires to put it to the test."

Francesca gently removed Guilo's head from her lap, and stood up.

"I am sad, I cannot sing to-night," she said, beginning to tremble.

"But the queen desires it."

"The queen? I thought you said the king."

"It was both their majesties; but the queen bade me stay to see that you were properly dressed to appear before so many noble lords and ladies."

"I will return at once," said Francesca, making a sign to Guilo, and she left the room.

She was absent but a few minutes, when she returned in a dress of black silk, with a fall of lace around the neck and arms, and relieved by no ornament save a coral bracelet marking the swell of her left arm, and a wreath of twisted coral that entwined her head, falling in blood red tassels down to one shoulder. Thus arrayed only in the strong contrast of black and red, stood the young girl, bearing in her right hand the lute—Lord Bowdon's gift to the orphan.

Francesca made a sign to Guilo, who sprang up and stationed himself by her side.

"I received no directions to bring any person but yourself," said the lady, judging by this movement that the singular page was intending to accompany them.

"He is my brother," said Francesca; "my better self: I can go nowhere without him!"

"Well—well, the queen seems to humor all these caprices for the sake of your music, and I suppose she will yield to this also; even do as you please, only delay me no longer," said the lady, impatiently.

"I am ready—we are both ready," replied Francesca, and hand in hand with her brother she went forth.

They were led through many an illuminated gallery and spacious room of bewildering magnificence, and Francesca began to marvel at the extent of the palace, when after making their way through several smaller rooms, where richly dressed men and women were busy at the card-tables, or divided into gay groups, they entered the state drawing-room by a side entrance, which brought them close to the dias where Catharine was seated, conversing with her royal husband, who stood leaning upon her chair, only turning away to receive with his usual careless grace some person brought up for presentation.

Below the dias, and conversing with two or three highly dressed lords of the court in a strain of gaiety that seemed forced and unnatural, stood the countess. But with all her efforts to carry off her discomposure with spirit, a frown now and then broke the snow of her forehead, and you might occasionally have detected her biting her nether lip till you could see the white teeth sink fiercely into the rich vermillion, and come out again with their edges stained crimson.

"Ah, here comes my pretty singing bird!" said the queen, addressing Charles in a low voice, and greeting Francesca with a smile as she came toward the

dias, still accompanied by Guilo. "Now let the king—acknowledged by all to be the best judge of beauty in his kingdom—say if he ever saw anything more lovely."

Charles lifted his eyes with his habitual indolence, which even the mention of beauty could not always conquer, and fixed them upon the two orphans. Guilo was leaning upon the lute gracefully, and as little embarrassed by the brilliant scene that surrounded him, as if he had been standing by a wayside hedge. Francesca stood by his side with downcast eyes and cheeks that grew pale and rosy with every heaving breath. Charles fixed his eyes upon them: he drew himself upright, and grasped the chair of state hard with his right hand; his gaze grew more intense: he seemed to hold his breath, then it came forth in one faint and broken gasp, while a look of anguish, keen but momentary, contracted his hard features.

"Nay, your highness, I must have an opinion. Is not my nightingale beautiful?" said the queen, touching the hand clenched upon her chair.

"Yes—yes, she is beautiful!" replied Charles, and lifting his eyes he encountered the gaze of Lady Castlemain: her forehead was dark with passion: her beautiful mouth curled with a sneering smile. Charles saw that she had been watching his emotion, the blood glowed through his dusky cheek, and crimsoned his forehead: he bent down as if occupied with what the queen was saying.

"Yes; let her sing!" he answered, and again his eyes dwelt as if fascinated by the sweet face of Francesca, who, dropping one knee to a step of the dias, touched the strings of her lute; a soft, wild prelude broke from the strings, louder and louder it rose like the carol of a lark when it first shakes the dew from its breast in the meadow grass; when the bird should have mounted and the gush of its song swell loudest upon the air, Francesca parted her lips, and with the lute strain arose a flow of melody that made the very air tremble around. There was a hush in the gay throng; the courtiers crowded up to the dias breathless and listening. Some were gazing upon the wonderful beauty of the songstress and her companion.

But the Countess of Castlemain turned not her eyes from King Charles. She saw when the blood swayed to his face, and when it was left fallow and paler than she had ever seen it before. She saw his firm hand tremble upon the chair when the first tones of Francesca's voice fell upon his ear. She lost no shadow of the deep emotion that Charles Stewart had no power to conceal, though he was well aware that her malicious eye was following him like a serpent.

Francesca's song was done. She arose from her knee, and giving the lute to Guilo, turned to leave the presence. Her eyes fell upon some object in the crowd—she uttered a faint cry, sprang forward, and fell fainting upon the palace floor.

Several persons came forward to raise the senseless girl; but among the first was the king. Pale and trembling with agitation, he came down the dias, and lifting the young girl in his arms gazed earnestly upon her face. His self-possession left him: he spoke to her: he called her by some name not her own. Then suddenly encountering the basilisk glance of Lady

Castlemain, he waved his hand with dignity, and bade the courtiers draw back that air might be admitted to the fainting girl.

There was that in the king's manner which even the countess dared not oppose, so she reluctantly retired with the rest.

"Leave the poor maiden with me," said Catharine, who had left her chair of state, and stood by the king anxious and pale, for at first she thought that Francesca was dead.

"I will," said the king, meeting her look with one of affectionate trust; "and Catharine be kind to her,

for she seems very young and helpless. To-morrow you shall tell me how she came here!"

"To-night, if it please your highness to retire a moment from the crowd," said Catharine; "surely we may give a moment to the restoration of a young creature so beautiful—so good. Oh! Charles, she has beguiled me of many a sad hour when you were away!"

"Let the revel go on as if her majesty were present!" said the king, in a loud voice, and he bore Francesca out in his arms, heedless of the gossip to which this unusual act of condescension might give rise.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 71.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Like a sudden storm upon the blast,
Came sweeping o'er his brain
Deep memories of the erring past,
And thought was bitter pain.

In the brilliant confusion that followed the disappearance of King Charles from the midst of his court, there stood three persons deeply interested in the wondering looks, the gay jibes, and the whispered comment that passed like magnetic lightning through the crowd. One of these was the old Earl of Berkley, who had been stationed near their majesties while Francesca was singing. As the royal pair left the room, this old noble turned, with a bland smile upon his lip, and drew close to the Countess of Castlemain. But he was received with a look of the most cutting scorn.

"This is your work, my lord—it is to you I am indebted!" she said, in a voice that shook with excess of passion, though she made an effort to subdue it. "In league with the queen against me, I doubt not in the least you introduced the creature into the royal apartments. It was well managed, my lord—very well managed!"

"Nay," replied the earl, courteously, bending to the wrathful storm, "I see nothing that should anger your ladyship. Surely the Countess of Castlemain cannot doubt the power of her own transcendent beauty.

"No!" replied the haughty woman, scarcely deigning to sink her voice, though, but for her passion, she might have seen that many of the courtiers were listening eagerly to her words. "The Countess of Castlemain doubts her power in nothing. This game is yet to be played out, my lord—I know that you possess consummate skill—I know that old and tried friends count for nothing, in your hands, but——"

"Hush, my lady—see you not that, like the rose, you are gathering court insects around you?"

"Such as I will brush off easily, as with one sweep of my hand might be scattered all your cobweb projects, my lord," replied the countess, and, with a haughty footstep, she passed down the room.

A young noble, sumptuously dressed, and but a few minutes before among the gayest of the throng, had stood near Lord Berkley and the countess, as this sharp dialogue passed between them. He caught

enough from their words to obtain a pretty correct idea of the whole scene, and now came up to the old earl, with considerable excitement in his look and manner.

"My lord!"

Lord Berkley started slightly, and looked around.

"Oh! Sir John Payton—I saw you a moment since in the crowd, and was about to make my way to you. In what part of his majesty's kingdom have you buried yourself of late?"

"I have been in Cornwall, spending some weeks with the Lord of Bowdon."

"Ah! and how is the young lord?—planted at the castle like one of his old oaks, I suppose?"

"He was *here*, not half an hour ago; but I see nothing of him just now," replied Sir John, carried from the subject nearest his heart in spite of himself, by the common-place manner in which the old earl received him.

"Here!" exclaimed the earl, with a degree of interest that amounted almost to excitement. "The Lord of Bowdon here!"

"He was here when that syren, who has caused so much commotion, began her song, my lord."

There was a moment's silence—the earl seemed cast into deep thought, and Sir John was embarrassed—he had evidently something on his mind which he did not well know how to express.

"That young musician, my lord—have not you and I met her in other scenes?"

"Perhaps—yes, doubtless; I scarcely heeded her: but is she not the little foreigner who was shipwrecked near Bowdon?"

"The same, my lord; but how came she here, domesticated at court? Excuse me, Lord Berkley—but those who stood around me when the girl fainted, asserted that you introduced this young creature here—that she was only known as a *protege* of yours."

"Indeed!"

"They whispered also—but this, for your own sake, I trust is not so—that she was intended from the first for the destiny that, from what has just transpired, seems but too certain! In the name of Heaven, tell me, Earl of Berkley, is this so—is this young creature destined to supplant the haughty Castlemain, and that by your connivance?"

"Sir John, you must be jesting when you ask these questions seriously of me! What interest can I have in a pretty wandering singer like this?"

"What interest!" Sir John checked himself—his

manner was excited, his face grew pale and red with conflicting feelings, and at last he spoke with an impressive solemnity altogether at variance with his usual gay and careless manner.

"My lord, I know not your motives in bringing this child to Hampton;—I only do know that she disappeared from Cornwall on the same day with yourself—that she is now here, in the king's palace—nay, in the king's very arms;—I ask how these things came about, and you answer me evasively. But I say to you, in compassion—in friend-ship—from the bottom of my heart, I say to you, Earl of Berkley, protect this young girl, as if she were a daughter of your own house—protect her from dishonor!"

Lord Berkley fixed a keen and almost fierce look on the young baronet, and it was some moments before he answered; when he did speak, it was with one of his cool and silky sneers.

"You do me undeserved honor, Sir John; I am not young enough to become the champion of every wandering demoiselle, who may happen to nest herself for a season beneath the royal roof."

Sir John crimsoned to the temples, and was about to return some hot reply, when there arose a sudden commotion in the room. Charles returned, leading his queen by the hand, and the calm and pleasant understanding that evidently existed between the royal pair effectually put a check to the scandalous whispers that had been so freely circulated during their absence. Charles looked unusually grave, but his manner to Catharine was marked by a degree of tenderness which none had witnessed in him since the first days of their marriage.

"You see, Sir John, this little maiden has better protection than you or I could render. I doubt much if the king ever saw her face before to-night. But her majesty is quite enchanted with the brilliant creature."

Sir John was thoughtfully gazing on the king, and he was struck by the grave, almost sad expression visible in his face. "Surely," he said to himself, "there is truth in what the old peer asserts—that is not the countenance of a man suddenly enamored with a new beauty." He turned to the earl with somewhat more of cordiality than had hitherto marked his demeanor.

"My lord, I may have spoken hastily, and at an ill-chosen place. But I was taken by surprise!"

"Tush, man, let the thing pass—see you not his majesty is coming this way?" was the good-humored reply.

Sir John drew back, for the king was evidently coming toward them, though he paused from time to time with his usual courteous attention, to address some lady who by chance or purpose stood in his way.

"My Lord of Berkley," said the monarch, pausing before the old earl, as if to make a passing inquiry, "Follow to my cabinet, when you see me retire—I would exchange a word with you!"

Berkley's heart bounded, but he bent his head with the most perfect self-possession, and sauntered gently down the room, always keeping the king in sight.

With many a graceful jest, and quick repartee—for

in those things Charles was always brilliant—the monarch passed through the rooms, gliding nearer and nearer to his cabinet, with every step;—but close by the door stood the Countess of Castlemain, almost wholly deserted by the courtiers, who, repulsed by her insolent demeanor, had gradually dropped from her side, and left her to the company of her own angry thoughts.

The king hesitated an instant as his eyes fell on this imperious woman who, superb in her disdainful beauty, stood, like an enraged Juno, waiting his approach. But this hesitation lasted only a single moment. Charles met the glance of those fierce black eyes with a look of steady and stern displeasure, and he walked on, with a firm step, merely bending his head as he passed her.

The countess turned pale, and her proud lips began to tremble. She looked eagerly around to see if any one had remarked this evidence of her waning power. Her eyes fell upon Lord Berkley—a smile was upon the old nobleman's lip, and he looked at her with a glance of quiet triumph.

The Countess of Castlemain was haughty, insolent, fiery—but she had no real dignity of character—no absolute pride. Her passions were violent, their reaction abject—already she began to regret having made the old and subtle courtier her enemy; she would gladly have found some excuse to address him again, to soften down all that she had said in the first outbreak of her jealous rage. But the old earl passed her with more cutting negligence than had marked the demeanor of the king—he bowed low, gliding forward all the time, and smilingly entered the royal closet.

"When"—said a gentle voice at her elbow—"when, great countess, may the most devoted of your slaves claim a moment's audience? Let it not be after to-morrow, for each hour will be an eternity till the happy moment shall arrive!"

"Sir John, is it you?" said the countess, still trembling with suppressed emotion. "To-morrow—yes, to-morrow be it, my good friend; come directly after the breakfast hour—I shall be glad to see you."

"Do not promise that too readily," answered Sir John, "wait till your ladyship hears all that I may ask in that interview—perhaps I may wish to tax all your interest with the king?"

"My interest with the king!"—as the countess uttered these words, a smile of bitter mortification swept over her face, but it was succeeded by a glow of returning courage, and she answered readily.

"Come in the morning—for I too may have favors to ask, and information to obtain."

"I will not fail in anything that can serve your ladyship," was the prompt reply, and Sir John moved forward, making room for two or three courtiers who, seeing him with the almost deserted countess, grouped themselves around her.

Meantime, Charles had entered his cabinet, and stood by the window, where the shadow of its heavy draperies fell athwart his countenance; he evidently sought to throw his features into obscurity during the conversation that would ensue. Here he fell into a train of deep, and, it would seem, very painful thought,

for he sighed from time to time, and once lifted his hand to brush away a tear, that had fallen suddenly like a single heavy rain-drop on his swarthy cheek. So lost was the monarch in the profound melancholy of his thoughts, that the Earl of Berkley had entered the closet, and was close by the window before Charles perceived him. Even then, the king did not seem able or willing to speak; he drew back into deeper shadow, and stood while a man might have drawn his breath five or six times with his eyes bent upon the floor.

"My lord," he said, at length, but there was something constrained in his voice, "I desire—I wish—to ask a question or two. This young girl, who sings so divinely—you saw her to-night—the queen tells me that you alone know something of her history?"

"Her majesty rather over-rates the amount of my knowledge," answered Lord Berkley, exulting in his heart over the profound interest which his *protege* had evidently excited in the breast of the king, "I really know only of this beautiful syren that she was wrecked on the coast of Cornwall last autumn, when Lord Bowdon went down to take possession of his estate, and that she, with a young lad, now a page in the household of my Lady Castlemain, were the only persons saved. Lord Bowdon gave them shelter, and seemed greatly attached to the poor children; but, for some cause—I never knew what—they left the castle privately, and, notwithstanding thorough search was made, no traces of the wanderers could be obtained. But, one day some weeks since, one of them drops into her majesty's carriage, with a cup of water in his hand, thus occasioning a strife between our fair young queen and the lady countess, which I with difficulty pacified by rendering up the boy for a page to her ladyship, while the demoiselle became, as your majesty must know, a favorite with the gentle Catharine!"

"And this is all you know of her!" said the king, in a tone of profound disappointment.

"All, may it please your highness—save that the body of her mother was afterwards found floating in a little cove near Bowdon, and now sleeps under an old oak on the shore."

"And the mother—did you see the mother?"

"Oh! yes. Sir John Payton and myself found her floating in the cove."

"And you did not recognize the poor lady?"

"No, sire; how should we—she was from a stranger land."

The king drew a deep breath—still his face was anxious and thoughtful—he seemed reluctant to yield up the subject without further investigation.

"And had these poor children nothing about their persons by which somewhat of their history might be traced?"

"Nothing, sire. The very garments they had on were so torn and drenched that, but for their speech, we might never have guessed to what country they belonged."

"But can they give no account of themselves? The maiden seems intelligent enough."

"They only know that the mother was a widow—

the father dead or absent—neither of them remember anything of him."

"And what brought the family to England?"

"This, sire, seems a mystery, like the rest."

Charles leaned against the window frame, baffled, disappointed, and lost in gloomy thoughts—so gloomy, that the old courtier began to wonder at the singular form in which the monarch's interest in the beautiful girl manifested itself. At length Charles looked up, his dark features grew pale, and now his brow knitted.

"And did you, my lord, see nothing to interest you—nothing, I would say, peculiar in this young girl?"

"Nothing, sire—save her marvelous loveliness, and that quick genius which is so much more piquant than beauty."

"She is lovely!" murmured Charles, in an undertone; but not so subdued were the words but the old peer drank them greedily in.

"Lovely?—I have never in my whole life seen anything to be compared with the maiden. Scarcely could I draw her from my thoughts for days and days after we left Bowdon!"

"But this—this might not have arisen so much from her beauty"—said the king, eagerly. "Sometimes there exist feelings deeper and more powerful than mere loveliness inspires; I cannot explain this, my lord—but is it not possible that your interest in the maiden arose from a deeper cause than admiration of her person?"

"Sire, I know no deeper or sweeter cause for the interest we take in women, than beauty and wit—both these has the maiden."

"You cannot understand, my Lord Berkley; and this proves that I am mistaken while dreaming of the things that have haunted me for the last hour," said Charles, and he turned away, keenly disappointed.

"I scarcely know what your majesty's dreams can have been," said the old courtier, sulkily; "but methinks they could not have proved very sad ones, while that young creature lay in your highness' arms."

The king turned suddenly, and looked at the old earl.

"You are right, Berkley—you are right in this!" Never in his whole life had Charles experienced sensations so sweet, so full of exquisite joy, and yet of the keenest pain too, as those that swelled his heart when that beautiful child lay against it. For another minute like that, he could give half his kingdom, and yet there was a pang mingled with the joy.

"It is seldom that even a monarch's heart can beat to the influence of beauty like hers. She is, indeed, an exquisite creature!" said the earl.

But the king had turned away, and was moodily pacing the cabinet. Spite of himself, his thoughts were all abroad; he did not hear—or hearing, did not heed—what the old earl said.

Again Charles paused in his walk—his face was troubled, his manner irresolute.

"My lord," he said, "name the things in which Charles can serve you. It is time that he should atone for past wrong."

"Past wrong, sire?"

"Past neglect, then. Awhile since, if I remember aright, my Lady Castlemain spoke of some preferment that you desired—think of it, and come to me again in a few days. Your wishes must be unreasonable indeed, if they meet a refusal here."

"Sire, I am gratified!" and, with a profound reverence, the old noble went out.

Charles stood in the midst of his cabinet till the door closed; then he sat down shading his forehead with one hand. A thousand sweet and mournful memories crowded to his brain, and, as he sat musing, drop after drop rolled through his fingers, and fell upon the noble mosaic slab upon which his elbow rested.

While the monarch of England was thus lost in the vast solitude of the eternity that has left us, the cabinet door opened softly, and the stately figure of a woman glided through. Charles lifted his head, and with a sudden revulsion of feeling saw the Countess of Castlemain.

"Madam"—he said, rising with dignity—"madam I would be alone!"

"Not while I live, Charles—not while you are angry with me," cried the artful woman, falling upon her knees. "Oh, kill me—kill me—here at your feet, but do not look upon me with this cruel coldness!"

"Rise, Lady Castlemain—rise! this no place for you. I wish for solitude!"

"And yet it is here you receive my most bitter enemy, while I am spurned forth unforgiven!" said the countess, and her splendid eyes filled with tears—that woman was very beautiful in her grief—the king had seldom resisted her, when that proud form was bent humbly before him, and those beautiful eyes shone soft with moisture. But now his heart was full of a holier, sweeter beauty than hers. In the voluptuous softness that half-feigned grief flung over her, there was something repulsive to him at a moment when all his better feelings were awake. Even had it been otherwise, he was weary with her turbulent alternations of anger and repentance. His habits of refinement had been shocked by her rudeness to the queen, and her subsequent audacious justification of that rudeness to himself. He turned from her, therefore, with a cold and stern demeanor.

"Not to-night—not here—will I talk with you, madam!"

The countess rose to her feet. Angry defiance curled her lip, and sparkled in her eyes; but the king regarded her with a look so displeased and stern, that for almost the first time in her life, she conquered the fierce outbreak of her rage.

"I will go!"—she said, and her voice trembled—"I will go, but to-morrow—if to-morrow pass, and I see you not, then come on the next morning, for, so surely as the sun rises, I shall be a corpse!"

"Leave me now, and the morrow you shall see or hear from me!" said the king, startled in spite of himself by the tone of mournful resolution in which she had uttered her threat.

The countess bent her knee to the floor, and, taking the king's hand, pressed her lips upon it. The

next instant she was gone, leaving the faint echo of a sob behind her, as she closed the door. She entered the state chambers. Instantly her whole demeanor changed; never had she paced those rooms with a brow more haughty or a step more imperious—a smile curled her lip, as she passed Lord Berkley, and when Sir John Payton approached her, she said, with that easy confidence that was the result of ill-used power, "come to me in the morning, and your suit with the king shall prosper, let it be what it may."

Lord Berkley heard this, and he smiled covertly. "My suit, which your ladyship took in hand with greater warmth, has prospered, and that to your ruin, and without your help, proud woman!" he thought; "oh, if the girl do not stand in her own light, and if neither of these hot-headed young men interfere, another week shall see that haughty forehead in the dust!" With these thoughts he passed the countess with a bland smile and a courteous inclination.

Violent alike in all her passions, the Countess of Castlemain had spent a sleepless and miserable night, and the morning found her pallid and harassed. She sent away the superb breakfast service before the pages could place it on a table, and bestowed many a sharp taunt and bitter reprimand upon every one who ventured to approach her. Even Guilo, sealed as his ears were to her reprimands, did not that morning escape censure. In everything the haughty woman fancied that she saw proof of the slight which the monarch had cast upon her by his evident coldness the night before. The billets and perfumed sonnets, that usually flowed in upon her breakfast hour, were reduced to half a dozen tradesmen's bills, and a few uncouth petitions. The countess tossed the whole mass from her with passionate disdain.

"The spaniels!—do they scent my downfall so soon?" she exclaimed, trampling the unoffending papers beneath her feet. "It was but yesterday that I was obliged to have the casements flung open while I read their perfumed adulation!—the king has but to look black upon me, and smilingly upon another, for one evening, and lo! this is the result!"

"My lady, did you call?" inquired a page, drawn to the door by the loud tones in which the countess spoke.

"No—yes! who waits in the ante-room, this morning?"

"Save the man from the theatres, and a few tradespeople with their wares, no one, my lady."

"Let the room be cleared; I would rather have it empty, than filled only with mountebanks and clowns! Has any of my people seen his majesty this morning?"

"Your ladyship, I believe not. One of his gentlemen of the chambers told me that he breakfasts with her highness the queen, and has not yet come forth."

The countess turned crimson, and her eyes gleamed. The page saw this, and took a malicious pleasure in exciting her fierce spirit.

"The same gentleman told me that orders had been given for a riding party at noon. The queen and all her ladies are to breathe their horses in Richmond Park."

"A riding party, and not apprized of it!" cried the countess, in absolute dismay, and heedless of the page, who stood demurely enjoying her discomfiture. "Give orders, sirrah, that my palfry and grooms be in readiness. I too will ride in Greenwich Park to-day."

The page bowed, and went out.

"Come back, sirrah!" cried the countess, stamping her silken-clad foot on the floor.

The lad came back, but did not advance beyond the door. Once or twice in his life, had he felt the weight of her ladyship's white hand. Just at that moment, he would very much have preferred the ante-chamber to the sumptuous room in which she stood.

"Go summon my head tirewoman, and tell her to bring the most becoming riding-dress from my wardrobe—something unique, and such as never yet has been seen at court."

The boy obeyed with great alacrity.

"Now"—exclaimed the countess—"now for one effort to regain the ground I have lost. They shall not hurl me to the earth, without a struggle!" and clenching her right hand fiercely, as she went, the countess entered her dressing-room.

Toward noon, Sir John Payton entered the deserted ante-chamber of the countess, and threw himself upon the crimson cushions of a couch, and bade the attendant who ushered him in inform the countess that he was waiting. After nearly half an hour's delay, Lady Castlemain came into the room, paler than usual, and with a depressed countenance, but splendidly arrayed in a riding costume of rich purple velvet, embroidered over the breast with silk threaded with gold, and buttoned from the throat down to the waist, with large diamonds. From her broad-leaved hat, of a deeper purple than the dress, fell a large long feather, of a rich gold color that flowed to her shoulder, mingling with her raven curls that floated free of all restraint, now revealing, now exposing, the white curve of her throat. Gauntlet gloves, of delicate buff and embroidered leather, with riding boots of the same pliant material, encased her exquisitely shaped feet and hands; and her costume was completed by a slender riding whip, with a large amethyst blazing in the handle. This she held in the same hand which gathered up the skirt of her dress, which, being somewhat longer than the prevailing fashion, thus coquettishly revealed the spirited turn of her ankle, without the appearance of premeditated exposure.

No woman of her time understood these little coquetties of dress better than the Countess of Castlemain; and, when passion did not obscure her quick intellect, few could equal her in those shades of art which give peculiar expression to the features. That day, her cheeks were almost colorless; and the snow of her complexion was contrast by two or three black patches, so disposed that they added to the pensive cast which real anxiety and fear of losing her sinful power, had given to her beauty.

Thus contrasting her melancholy with the most superb attire, this woman presented herself before the young baronet.

Sir John arose, and led the countess to a seat,

pouring forth ardent expressions of the admiration that he really felt.

"I gave you a rash promise, last night," said her ladyship, opening the conversation. "Still, if fortune does not altogether desert me this day, I will not fail to keep my pledge. What is the suit you would urge with the king?"

"Lady, I heard somewhat of your conversation with Lord Berkley last night, and having a deep interest in the young person who so unfortunately aroused your displeasure, I saw at once that our interests went together. This maiden, from her beauty and the rich graces of her mind, is indeed a dangerous person to any one who loves the king. I wonder her majesty sees it not!"

"Oh; Catharine would risk anything—endure anything—torture itself, I do believe—could she be certain of inflicting any portion of the pain on me!"

"It must be your wish to remove this dangerous beauty from the royal household," answered Sir John.

"My wish, truly—it is the thought that has kept me in agony all night; but how is it to be done? I dare not even attempt to interfere with Catharine's household. This little singer only yesterday refused to bring a stool at my command—the queen promptly sustained her insolent favorite, and, when I complained to Charles, he told me bluntly that in her majesty's presence it was presumption for me to give an order, or even attempt to sit down unbidden. I tell you this, Sir John, though it would torture me were it known to the court."

"You can trust me—our interests in this must run together—I saw it from the first."

"You may be sure," resumed the countess, "that I did not receive this reproof with the meekness of a saint. Charles became angry, and left me in wrath. You saw the cruel coldness with which I was received, while he bore the little singing wretch out in his arms, before the whole court. Oh, I would give my life to send her hence!"

"And so you can, dear countess—so you shall, believe me; and that without incurring his majesty's displeasure. This maiden I have seen before; there are reasons—no matter what—that render me willing to make her Lady Payton."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the countess astonished, "why, she is utterly penniless—a sort of strolling singer."

"And yet I am ready to marry her, the king consenting, even to-morrow."

"This will do, Sir John! Sir John, hold me your debtor! If you will wed the maiden, and take her hence, we shall frustrate Berkley—we shall triumph in our turn."

"Then I have your pledge, dear lady—for once use all your matchless fascination in my behalf. Influence the king to sustain my suit in preference to those of all other persons—for others may yet put forth claims to her hand."

"All the influence that remains to me—all that I may hope for—shall be yours! Even the queen must be won to aid us."

"But speedily, fair princess, speedily set your

chairs to work—I would not have the future Lady Payton a resident beneath the royal roof longer than is absolutely needful."

"And think you her presence is so welcome to me that I shall not act with all possible haste?" said the countess, with a bitter smile.

That moment there arose a confused sound from one of the palace courts—the tramp of horses, the voices of grooms, followed by the gay laughter of cavaliers and ladies, mounting for a ride. The countess started up, grasping her whip impatiently.

"Come, Sir John, lead me to my horse. The king is mounting now, and the queen—I hear her voice—and—and——"

She turned pale, for her window commanded the portal through which the gay cavalcade was sweeping into the open country, and riding among the ladies of honor she saw the slight form of the Italian singer, Francesca.

"We have no time to lose;—see, yonder goes your future wife—see, Sir John, side by side, with the noblest ladies of England! What does this portend?" cried the countess, pointing toward the graceful figure of Francesca with her whip.

"No good to our compact, surely," said Sir John, biting his lip; "but, fair lady, if you are for Greenwich, to horse, at once; we may yet overtake the royal cavalcade, and thus may I obtain a moment's conversation with this little will-o-the-wisp, that seems to evade me at every point!"

The countess gave her hand to Sir John Payton, and they descended into the court together. Here, a fine hunter, with grooms in rich livery, waited for Sir John; and four of Lady Castlemain's retainers, gorgeously arrayed in blue and gold, stood by their black horses, while a page held the snow white palfrey of the countess by the golden bit, ready for her to mount.

A moment sufficed for mounting, and then with the retainers mingling together, the countess and her companions rode through the open portal at a hard gallop, following the glittering cavalcade that, half clouded with dust, was sweeping along the road to Greenwich. Scarcely had the royal party entered the shades of Greenwich, when the countess and her escort joined the gay group, near enough to be supposed of the same company, but still without absolutely obtruding themselves upon the notice of the king.

"See!" cried the countess, checking her horse sharply, while her lips grew livid with rage—"see!"

A break in the gay cavalcade that surrounded the king and queen here gave a full view of the royal pair. Charles was riding onward, with his usual graceful negligence, reining the high-blooded horse with his right hand, while in the ungloved clasp of the other, he held the hand of his wife. Thus cantering gracefully through the cool glades of the park, smiling upon each other, and conversing with cheerful cordiality, Sir John Payton and the Countess of Castlemain saw the royal, and, at that moment, happy pair. Catharine looked even more than beautiful in her bright happiness. Her plump, little figure, in its

close bodice of fine white cloth, and the crimson skirt, just short enough to reveal an exquisite little foot fitting neatly into the golden stirrup—a hat of crimson velvet, from which a snow-white feather streamed out with her raven curls. This dress, so piquant, and so novel, joined to the sweet vivacity of her face, made the Queen of England one of the most interesting little gipsies you could well imagine.

Charles gazed on her admiringly, his own heavy features lighted up, and in the vivacity of his spirits he seemed like a school-boy playing truant in the woods. He laughed at the sweet, broken mistakes that the queen was constantly perpetrating in her English. He loved to puzzle her with long words, and cheat her into saying the drollest things to him while innocent of their meaning, and quite perplexed to know why he laughed so gleefully at her sayings. That morning, at least, King Charles well deserved his appellation of the "merry monarch;" and she—the royal Catharine—her cup of bliss sparkled brightly, and overflowed beneath those thick oak boughs. She had almost forgotten that the Countess of Castlemain existed on the earth. As the cavalcade plunged deeper into the cool shades of the park, Catharine turned her head and nodded to Francesca, who rode quietly up, and received the little crimson hat, which Catharine took from her head, turning, with a mischievous smile, to the king, as the wind took her curls and bathed her young forehead with the breath of a thousand wild flowers. Charles was in a happy mood, and this little playful extravagance quite enchanted him. He took off his own hat, and holding it carelessly on the saddle-bow, spake a few kind words to Francesca, and bade her ride round on the other side his horse, that he might converse with her more at ease. The queen smiled gently, and bade her go. The young girl obeyed with a beating heart, almost terrified by the strange sensations that seemed to make every nerve in her body tremble whenever the king addressed her.

It was singular, but Charles, too, became a little sad, as he listened to the low voice of this young girl, broken, as it was, by her foreign accent, and the wild murmur of the leaves. He talked to her of Italy—of the skies so much bluer and brighter than those of his kingdom—of the lakes where he had sailed, when an exile and a royal beggar in that beautiful land. Gradually as the memory of the sweet South came over him, he spake in the language appropriate to the clime. He asked many things of Francesca, and she answered him gently in that sweet, foreign tongue. The queen did not understand them, but she listened smiling, pleased to see her husband interested in her pretty favorite. And others watched them—some, with pleasant curiosity—others, with burning envy; but, in all that gay and licentious court, there was not one who in his heart dared to cast an injurious suspicion on that pure girl. There was something in her manner so simple—so far removed from the least air of coquetry—that even the profligate could not choose but respect her.

But there rode those upon the outskirts of the cavalcade, who watched the scene with bitter and vindictive feelings. The haughty brow of Lady Castlemain

grew black as midnight, when her eyes fell upon the calm and gentle girl. A thousand wicked projects entered her mind, which were to drive this young creature from the court—nay, into the very grave. She urged her horse forward and held him in, till the chafed and enraged animal grew fierce under her cruelty. She goaded him with her whip, and chafed his mouth with the golden bit, till specks of blood mingled with the foam that flew over his glossy chest. She took a ferocious pleasure in torturing the beautiful animal into a fit of rage, fierce as that which burned in her own bosom.

At length both horse and rider became excited beyond endurance. With all her audacity, the countess had not the courage to ride forward and upbraid Charles before his court, as her wicked heart prompted. She curbed the poor horse still more sharply—he reared, made a plunge, and, with her fierce spirit all on fire, she gave him head, and he plunged like an arrow into the thickest of the park.

The boughs grew low upon the trees, and there was great danger to the countess, as her enraged horse rushed under them. The king saw this—he

was naturally humane and brave. The face of Lady Castlemain gleamed pale as death, as she shot by him—he forgot her fault—forgot his wife—everything, save that the countess was in peril, and that her face, even in the agony of her flight, was turned imploringly toward him. The plumed hat dropped from his hand, he put spurs to his hunter, and the next instant had left queen and courtiers far behind, while his horse leaped through the trees almost as madly as the enraged animal which still bore the countess on and on, while she filled the solitude with her shrieks.

When in the very thickest of the park, the palfrey wheeled with a sharp curve around an enormous tree that blocked his path; he lost his foothold, staggered, made a plunge, and rushed on, with the rich saddle dragging along the ground, and riderless.

When some of the courtiers came to this spot, they found Charles kneeling upon the turf, supporting the pale and insensible form of Lady Castlemain in his arms. His own face was pale almost as hers, and in his terror he uttered words that would have made the pure heart of his queen ache with pain had she found strength to reach the spot. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 102.

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CHAPTER XVII.

There was mischief on her dewy lip,
And in her laughing eye
There lay a soft, mischievous light,
Like sunshine in the sky.
Her gleeful laugh was musical;
Her step was full of grace:
Your very heart grew warm and full
While gazing on her face!

THERE was in one of those narrow streets that face the strand with the river Thames, a plain, gloomy dwelling, huddled up among the stores and tradesmen's booths that were most numerous near the water, at a time when the Thames was one great thoroughfare for London transmigration. The house was dull and sombre, both within and without; a wine store occupied the lower story, and the apartments above accommodated the wine dealer's family, and not unfrequently a lodger or two when any choice member of the religious sect to which he belonged, happened to require accommodations.

The dreary chamber, usually appropriated to such guests, looked out upon the river, thus giving free air and a somewhat extended prospect to the inmates. A few high-backed chairs, an oaken table, and a ponderous clock, offered little to interest within doors; and this river prospect was in truth all the charm the old dwelling could boast of.

In this room, stationed by a window, through which the river might be seen, sat our pretty favorite Eunice Bruce, rosier, plumper, and more lovely than ever. On the same morning, not long after the scene described in our last chapter, fresh and blooming as a rose-bud, was pretty Eunice that morning. Her dress was richer in material than when we first made her acquaintance in the country, though nothing could have been more staid and precise than the fashion in which it was made, still a roguish and graceful dash of coquetry broke through it all. The sweet, mischievous glee of her character would gleam through plait and fold, as the crimson glow of sunset will illuminate the edges of a cloud when there is much warmth in the sky. Her tresses escaped in glossy waves beneath her little mob cap. Her arms and neck, so swelling and full, shone out from the contrast of her black velvet boddice white and smooth as satin. A skirt of crimson silk flowed down to her slender ankles, but left the plump little feet exposed in their buskins of Spanish leather, clasped on the instep with the smallest of golden buckles—tiny enough,

the pretty wearer devoutly hoped, to escape the condemning eye of her Puritan husband. A golden chain, borrowed surreptitiously from her aunt, the house-keeper at Bowdon, fell in glittering links adown the swelling plumpness of her neck. Thus arranged, and playing somewhat awkwardly with the links of her borrowed chain, sat Eunice Bruce; and by her side, nay, almost kneeling at her feet, was Sir John Payton. They had been long talking; earnestly together, and now their conversation seemed drawing to a conclusion. In Sir John's eyes, half veiled as was their fire by the drooping lashes—in the crimson warmth of his cheek, and the deep red of his parted lips, there lay a world of iniquitous thought and passion. It required but a glance to know what were the impulses that possessed him. But there was something more indefinite in the expression with which Eunice Bruce listened to his half veiled protestations of love. She did not quite seem to comprehend his full meaning; her cheek was vividly red, it is true; and her lips, slightly tremulous, seemed ready to break into a smile or a quiver of indignation with the next thought. Her eyes were bent upon the floor, and she twined and untwined the gold chain around her fingers, now slowly, now with a quick and impetuous motion.

"Say that you understand me—say, my Eunice, that you will not cast aside the love of one that adores you, and again bury yourself in the country with that——"

Eunice stood up, her face now took a decided expression. Her eyes kindled; her cheeks grew white, and tears flashed over them like hail-stones from a stormy sky. Before she could speak, while her bosom was heaving, and the indignant words at her heart remained all unspoken, her feelings were thrown into a new current by the sound of footsteps approaching the room.

"Up, Sir John. It is my husband. It is my husband, I say!"

Sir John started to his feet, drew back a pace or two, and with one hand resting, as if carelessly, on the hilt of his rapier, waited in some confusion the scene which was to follow. A moment of anxious silence succeeded; then the door opened and admitted, not the husband of Eunice Bruce, but Lord Bowdon! The greeting between these two young men was cold and formal in the extreme. Both wondered greatly at seeing the other there; and from many causes coldness and restraint were the natural consequences of their meeting. Eunice forgot the scene that had agitated

her but a moment before, in surprise and pleasure at once more beholding the noble playmate of her childhood. She came forward, therefore, beaming with graceful gladness, and gave Lord Bowdon a cordial, but modest greeting.

Sir John lingered a moment in the room, waiting for an opportunity of addressing the young woman apart, but she seemed wholly occupied by her new guest, and with a look of keen annoyance he left the chamber, observing that on the morrow he would call again to consult with Master Bruce on the business that had called him to London.

Eunice either did not hear him, or was unwilling to appear as if she did, for she merely bent her head as the baronet went out, and her face took a momentary shade of gravity, as if she were annoyed at being compelled even to this scant civility.

When left alone together there was a shade of embarrassment, both in the manner of Lord Bowdon and of Eunice Bruce. Lord Bowdon took the huge chair which Eunice dragged forth for him in grave silence, and, after a little hesitation, she sat down by the table, rested her elbow upon it, and remained with her eyes bent on the floor, waiting for her lordship to speak.

"I suppose," said Eunice at length, with true feminine impatience, "I suppose you must have been surprised to learn that we had come up to town?"

"I met your husband an hour since, and he told me you were here. I own it did surprise me not a little; but what is this difficulty about which your husband feels so much interest?"

"Indeed I hardly know. Bethna, our place, was given him by the lord protector, and after you came down to Bowdon in full possession, John was told, or fancied that our little property would be resumed by the king, and added to the estate. Sir—Sir John Payton promised his interest at court in preventing this, and so we came up to town. I believe that is all the reason—no other was given to me!"

Lord Bowdon smiled gently.

"And did you think, Eunice, that I would thus accept the little patrimony of my playmate? This thing was never thought of in any quarter. I would have been the first to refuse the gift had the king offered it; but believe me, Eunice, his majesty is hardly aware of your existence; and knows not, I am sure, that such a place as Bethna lies within his kingdom."

The color mounted to the young woman's temples and she fell into deep thought for an instant.

"To-morrow," she said, after a moment of pre-occupation—"to-morrow it was settled that I should go to the court, where Sir John has promised to plead our cause with some great countess, whom he says can persuade the king to almost anything."

"The Countess of Castlemain, I suppose," said Lord Bowdon, with a look of displeased amazement. "Yes, that is the name."

"And are you going to intercede with this lady against an evil that I assure you is all fancied?" said Bowdon, anxiously.

"My husband will not believe that it is fancied!" replied Eunice. "Sir John Payton has too deeply impressed him with the belief that he is to be despoiled

and an idea once anchored in an honest man's mind never can be removed by any means. Besides," added Eunice, blushing to the temples, "I should so like to see the court!"

Lord Bowdon smiled sadly.

"The court is an evil place, my pretty playmate; a lighted taper at which such gay flutterers as you are too often singe their wings."

"It has not served to make you more cheerful, my good lord, at any rate," said Eunice, with a sigh. "You are sad—you look weary of life even when you try to speak cheerfully. I wish it were now as in the olden times, when you were not a great lord, and I only little Eunice, your playmate—oh! those were happy times; I was not afraid then to say 'what is the matter' when the cloud was on your spirit."

Eunice spoke with much feeling, and tears stood in her eyes.

Lord Bowdon arose, and taking her hand, shook it gently.

"And why are you afraid of me now, Eunice?" he said, with sudden animation; "do you think I should not be grateful for your sympathy as of old?"

"Ah, my dear lord, if I did but know what it is that has changed you so much! perhaps even little Eunice might be of service. Indeed—indeed there is nothing in the wide world that I would not do if it promised to bring the old smile upon your lips again."

Lord Bowdon looked earnestly in her bright and eager face; then dropping her hand, he paced the floor in deep thought two or three times.

"She is true—she is sincere—and to some one I must speak," he mused within himself. "There will at least be consolation in her sympathy." Lord Bowdon resumed his seat, and drew it closer to the table where Eunice was leaning.

"My little playmate!" he said, with a smile, "if you ask me 'what is the matter' now, as you were wont when my kite was borne off by the winds, or my gray-hound lamed, I will answer you frankly as of old."

Eunice turned her open and smiling face upon the young lord as she had turned it years ago upon the playmate of her childhood.

"Nay, part I have guessed, and part has been told me by my good old aunt, so I will save half your narrative, my lord—about the shipwreck—the pretty singing lady who built her bower for a time at Bowdon, and then flew away. I know as well as any one that you loved her, I can well guess, and that you mourn her still is but natural. If there is anything more to learn, pray tell little Eunice that she may know how to serve you!"

"But you do not know," said Lord Bowdon, "that I was pledged before my father's death to marry a lady of the king's choosing, and, therefore, could not in honor give my affections to Francesca; and that on learning this, she fled with her brother from the shelter of my roof, alone and unfriended, to wander through the land. You do not know, Eunice, that she is now at court, protected by the queen, distinguished by Charles himself in a way that would ruin a creature less holy in her innocence. That in her simple honesty she has risen above court scandal and

court intrigue, and that few ladies of noble birth are held in higher consideration than this gentle singing girl. I have not spoken with Francesca, have not permitted myself to approach her, but of all this I am well assured!"

"Well, my lord, and what is there to grieve you in this? If this beautiful singing bird can flutter her gay plumage at court in all honor and safety, why should it distress those that love her?"

"There exists a doubt—much doubt in my mind if there can be safety to Francesca at the court. She is a gentle and sensitive creature, Eunice, every way unfit for the atmosphere that surrounds her. I cannot explain to you the peril in which she is placed. Lady Castlemain will never rest till she is in some way removed from the royal household. This woman controls the king, and he, through her deep affection, can at any time mould Queen Catharine to his wishes; even now I am told these three powerful personages are united in urging Francesca to a marriage most unsuited to her. With a man like Sir John Payton the poor child would be forever miserable!"

"Sir John Payton, my good lord, did I hear aright. Is Sir John Payton the gentleman who just left us, in treaty of marriage with the maiden?" exclaimed Eunice, with a look of profound surprise. Her cheek grew pale and flushed crimson again as she waited for a reply to her eager question.

"This man has certainly made proposals of marriage to Francesca, and his suit is sustained by the Countess of Castlemain, and through her influence by the king, and even Catharine herself smiles upon it!"

"But he loves her not. Sir John loves not this Francesca. Surely you will not say that?" cried Eunice, trembling with emotion.

"From a word that dropped from him at Bowdon I am sure that some influence other than affection has induced this proposal. What it is I am utterly at a loss to guess," said Lord Bowdon.

Eunice fell into a musing fit which lasted several minutes. She then looked up with a grave and thoughtful face. "It is not love—it is not wealth, for as you say, my lord, the maiden has only her voice and her lute. Birth it cannot be, for her parentage is foreign and unknown. What can it be that induces Sir John to this proposal? Is his own estate so large or his rank so high that he can afford to wed thus with a penniless maiden whose very name is unknown?"

"Nay, Sir John has but a small and much encumbered estate. It was always thought that he would seek a rich wife to mend his fortunes."

"He is a villain!" muttered Eunice, and her open brow contracted as she fell into thought again.

"If," said Lord Bowdon, "Francesca loved the man—if he loved her I would for myself endure the thoughts of this marriage."

"Then you are certain, my lord, that she does not love him?"

Lord Bowdon smiled painfully—"I am certain from what I know of her character and of his, that Francesca cannot love him. But of this I would be certain. If I could in honor communicate with her—

if I could see her and remain calm. But how can I, pledged to another, interfere to draw her from her present high protection or from a marriage that the whole world must deem a march of good fortune?"

"There is deception—there is villainy somewhere. I am sure of that!" said Eunice. "I will find it out. I will help you, my lord. You shall not have confided in little Eunice for nothing. This, Sir John Payton, if his mystery is not revealed, I will go to the court now. We will know how fares the tingly lord. I have a plan, only give me time to manage and put it neatly together. He has brought me up to London to save Bethna, that never was in danger, from you. What if I pay him by saving Francesca from him? You do not know what the man was saying to me as you came in. He is court bred and I am but a country wild bird; but let him see that his fruit does not suffer. I can peck! I can peck!" and Eunice ended with a clear and ringing laugh.

Lord Bowdon could not choose but smile at her joyous spirits—there was something hopeful and contagious in them that swept half the gloom from his face.

"Come, come, old playmate, cheer up. See if the little country mouse does not nibble apart the net they have flung over you. Men who only know how to cut through difficulties with the hood, sword, and battle-axe, have no idea what virtue there is in a little pair of pointed scissors!"

"But, Eunice, do not involve yourself in difficulties to aid me. You, with this frank nature and pretty face will prove a feeble match for court craft and courtier's flattery!" said Lord Bowdon, earnestly.

"Trust me, trust me; I am in the daylight now; I can see my way clear enough. Come again to-morrow—no, next day, or perhaps the day after, and see if I don't have news for you."

"Be careful, oh, be careful, Eunice, I shall repent to my dying day having spoken on this subject should it lead to your harm."

"Nay, farewell! I hear the voice of honest John Bruce below, he must still believe that Bethna is in peril that I may yet stay in London! Good day, my lord. Oh, this does indeed seem like old times. I am not in the least afraid of you, now!"

Lord Bowdon went out, and with a quick, light step, Eunice began to pace the room, twisting the golden chain about her hands, and shaking it now and then till the links flashed like fire against her velvet boddice.

"Let him come! Let him come to-morrow with his living glances and his glaring tongue, a fine court angler he—thinking the silken catfiff that any dart of a fly will do for our hook trout, but he shall gild the wings and change the bait many a time, I can tell him that. Oh, honest John Bruce, thou dear thick-headed man, what a precious dupe this silken villain has made of thee."

Just then John Bruce entered the chamber, and having been some hours absent, folded his pretty wife to his ample bosom, impressing a salute upon her crimson cheek that might have been heard in the warehouse below.

"To-morrow, to-morrow, shalt thou go up to court

and resume my estate, even Bethna from the hands of the spoiler," said John Bruce, drawing a hand across his lips as if the glow of that crimson cheek had refreshed him like a glass of wine. "It was but now I met our excellent friend, Sir John Payton, who informeth me that he has already made interest for us with this female that sitteth at the king's right hand, even the great Countess of Castlemain, and that to-morrow her ladyship will give into thy hands a sealed covenant, that Lord Bowdon, nor any of the ungodly shall wrest from John Bruce his inheritance."

"And who is to be my companion when I visit this lofty countess?" inquired Eunice Bruce.

"None other than the worshipful Sir John Payton himself proposeth to do thee this honor, Eunice."

A momentary frown passed over the blithe features of Eunice Bruce, but it was followed by a smile full of playful mischief, and she answered:

"I must not shame this court gallant with my country breeding, John Bruce, so give me four broad pieces that I may put a plume upon my hat and buy a kirtle of velvet."

"Nay, Eunice, with thy comeliness thou art adorned like the lilies of the valley that toil and spin not. Therefore put not on the garments of unrighteousness that the ungodly may be induced to gaze upon thee as thou goest forth. Unto thy husband, John Bruce, thou art even comely and dear as the apple of his eye."

"I know, I know that I am," said Eunice Bruce, with tears in her eyes. "Keep the broad pieces in thy pouch, John, I did but jest when I craved of the kirtles and plumes that become not thy wife."

Again for this dutiful submission, Eunice received another salute, that well nigh took away her breath, and donning her country hat and her mantle of grey cloth, she took her husband's arm and sallied forth to see the wonders of London.

Earlier than Eunice had expected him by two good hours, came Sir John Payton on the morrow. He knew that John Bruce would be absent from his lady in the morning, and so came early, leaving his barge at the water's edge, while he sought Eunice in her chamber. The pretty Puritan saw him coming up from the river, daintily picking his steps along the broken street, and guarding with great care his fluttering apparel from contagion. Her eyes began to sparkle with an expression, half indignant, half mischievous; her cheeks took fire, and the smile that revealed her white and even teeth was both scornful and roguish.

She heard Sir John on the stairs, and though he mounted them with a quick step, before he reached the chamber her pretty face was composed to a demure and bashful expression.

"Alone, and waiting, I am too happy!" exclaimed the young baronet, taking her hand, which, however, she drew bashfully from his grasp.

"No, you shall not be cruel to-day, my Hebe. Why are those pretty lips gathered up so poutingly like a rose-bud churlishly nursing its dew? Why is that snowy shoulder turned so disdainfully upon me? If I have sinned, sweet Eunice, kill me with a glance

of those eyes, but, in mercy, keep them veiled no longer. Eunice, dear Eunice, you will not deal so harshly with me because, loving you with a desperate passion that would not be concealed, I have, in an unguarded moment, betrayed my secret?"

There was a struggle in the heart of Eunice Bruce. Perhaps she kept her shoulder turned upon the young courtier to conceal feelings that were becoming too powerful for her. However this may be, when she turned her face toward him, it bore traces of considerable emotion, not altogether forbidding.

"You forgive me, sweet one; you will not drive me to despair?" cried Sir John, and he would have pressed her hand to his lips, but she drew it hastily away.

"Nay, Sir John, you presume too much and too early," she said. "These words and this position from a man who is even now urging his suit with another lady—they are insulting!"

Sir John changed color and bit his lip till the marks of his white teeth were left in the warm crimson.

"Another lady, sweet Eunice, what mean you?" he stammered, with a look of annoyance.

"I speak," replied Eunice, "of the young foreigner now under the protection of our gracious queen, to whom Sir John Payton has openly made proposals of marriage, while he was attempting to deceive the rustic wife of John Bruce into a belief that he loved her better than aught else on earth."

"And so I do, by all that is sacred! Never man loved woman with a passion so well as that which I feel for you!" cried Sir John, with energy.

"And yet you are in treaty of marriage with another!"

"But I love her not. There is not upon the broad earth a woman who ever has, or ever can divide my heart with you."

Eunice shook her head with an incredulous smile. "Still you deny not that proposals have been made by which this pretty foreign maiden will become your wife, while I—" Eunice blushed crimson and her eyes flashed. "What would you make of me?"

"The sun of my heart, the adored lady of my love!"

"While this lady will bear your name—divide your fortune, and in the end win away the heart with her beauty, while I shall have given up husband and good name to make mine own—out upon it, Sir John, you love the lady now!"

"On my life; on my soul, Eunice, but for the wealth and power which she will bring me, this person is indifferent to me as thousands of women whom I never saw!"

"Wealth and power, Sir John; why, the maiden some few months since was but a strolling singer—so rumor has it. It is for love! I say naught else would induce a brave courtier to unite himself with a nameless, penniless wonderer like that!"

"Nay, Eunice, nay," persisted Sir John. "It is you, only you, whom I love!"

"Out upon such love! I will have none of it! Think you, Sir John, that I will give up an honest name, a husband of fair standing and good substance, and all for one who loves another all the time!"

Sir John made an impatient gesture, and began to

pace the room, biting his lip angrily, and to all appearance, sustaining a powerful struggle within himself. Eunice sat down partially veiling her face with one hand, but she contrived to steal a private glance now and then at her courtly admirer through the rosy fingers, and, spite of her efforts to suppress it, a half smile might be seen hovering around the lips that her palm failed entirely to cover. The instant Sir John placed himself by her side this mischievous glance was subdued. The fingers were pressed close to her eyes, and she turned suddenly from him.

"If," said Sir John, "if I can prove to you that my broken fortunes, not my will consents to this marriage; that I submit to it as the only means by which my rank and present position can be maintained—if I can prove all this, and that it is for you that I make the sacrifice, then, Eunice, then will you frown upon me thus?"

"But you cannot prove it," said Eunice. "This wealth—this power—the maiden has it not."

"But if I *do* prove it?"

"Nay, the thing is impossible; it is useless speaking of it."

"Eunice, will you not take my word?"

"No; how should I? Did you tell me of this marriage project? Was not all your protestations a deception?"

Sir John started up, absolutely grinding his teeth with rage.

"A false tongue has brought this gossip hither!" he exclaimed.

"Nay, if the gossip be true, and as yet it is undenied, why should I be kept in ignorance when it is the wonder of half London? Think you my rustic breeding requires no court enlightenment?"

"But, Eunice, you answer me not; this banter of sharp words means nothing. Let us to the river, my barge waits, and the soft air will blow away this sullen humor!"

"My husband has ordered it so, and I am ready!" replied Eunice, demurely taking up her hat and mantle. "Would that we were safe at Bethna again!" and the pretty traitoress heaved a sigh.

A barge with rowers in livery lay at the water's edge, and into this Eunice Bruce stepped, declining the assistance of Sir John, and nestling herself down among the cushions, she studiously fixed her attentions on the scene lying before her. Sir John was greatly annoyed, and sat in evident ill-humor gazing upon the demure and thoughtful face so resolutely turned from him. Nothing could have been more beautiful than the river that day. The water was silvery and light with sunshine; barges, wherries, and every species of water craft floated up and down the stream, rippling and flashing through the waves, some with silken streamers floating to the dip of a dozen oars, and others toiling heavily along with a slow and monotonous pull. All this was new to Eunice Bruce, and without an effort she found her attentions

sufficiently occupied. The town in all the grandeur of its vast, gloomy walls—the noble mansions upon the river's brink, and a thousand objects almost of equal interest, were quite enough to excite her blithesome spirit with almost child-like curiosity. Her bright eyes roved from one object of interest to another, now and then her silvery laugh rang out upon the water freely, as if she had been roaming in her own native wild wood. She seemed to forget that Sir John was present, but whenever he attempted to address her the joyous carelessness of her manner disappeared. She became cold and almost repulsive. At length he lost all patience.

"Will you ever remain in this humor?" he exclaimed, angrily.

"Why not amuse yourself as I do, Sir John. Surely these are pleasant sights upon the water," cried Eunice, with a careless laugh; "one needs only a little rustic credulity to make a fairy land of this. Now why should I not fancy these the diamonds that will crown your bride?—more reasonable by far than that you should wed her for the wealth that she has not, and never can have."

Eunice dipped her pretty hand into the water, and a shower of sunlit drops rained from her rosy fingers as she spoke.

"Will you never have done with this subject?—never forgive the sacrifice I am compelled to make?"

"Never—never, on my life," cried Eunice, turning her flashing eyes upon him, "while you attempt this double deception! Follow your heart if you will and wed this maiden, but do not strive to convince me that you have any motive save the woman—love that her beauty has kindled in a fickle heart. Wed her, but leave me in peace."

"Will nothing convince you that my reasons for wishing this union are such as I have stated?"

"Nothing but proof such as you have not to give—until you can convince me that these water-drops are jewels of price by your bare word alone, will I believe in the mysterious wealth which exists in nothing but your assertion."

"But if I prove beyond contest that this lady has wealth enough to disencumber my estate, and that a union with her will give me even more power than wealth?"

"Oh, then!" said Eunice, smiling, as she tossed the water-drops in the sunshine—"then we may talk of other things."

"And not till then, Eunice?"

"In sooth, no; your town ladies may be content to accept divided hearts, but we of the country are not satisfied with less than we give."

The barge sped on its way, and Sir John fell into deep thought, in which there seemed to be many conflicting doubts. Eunice also became more serious as the river scenery became less interesting, and thus the two pursued their course down the Thames.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Continued from Page 142.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

"Alas, that man's success should move
The very charm that wakes his love." MARMION.

Why is it that man, even in selfishness, will never become wise enough to learn that neglect or wrong to the woman who loves him dashes away the bloom from his own fruit—the dew from the leaves that shelter it? The woman's heart, exposed to constant neglect and wrong, is certain either to wither and yield up the strength of its best affections, or what is far worse, harden into cold and reckless indifference, allowing the pure sympathies that have been rejected to freeze over and petrify in her heart, as we sometimes find wild blossoms buried in the stone, which chance and time has consolidated around them; blossoms existing still, but so fettered and choked up from light and air, that they remain inert and dead in every thing but form and color. Thus until the rock is broken in twain, we know not that it was ever pliant and yielding enough to fold a wild blossom in its cold centre.

A good and a warm young heart was that which Catharine of Braganza brought to her kingly husband—rich in feeling, ardent, sincere, impulsive, she was a feeble match for the careless manner but unyielding will of a husband, whose selfishness was not the less intense that it was bland, nor the less oppressive that it was carelessly urged.

Since her ride in Greenwich Park, when all her gentle hopes of regaining her husband's love were so heartlessly crushed, Catharine seemed to have changed her character. Hopeless and heart sick with a struggle against the will of her husband, and the insolence of a rival now more shameless than ever, the poor queen yielded unresisting to her fate; she had lost all strength to resist, and dashing aside at once her woman's tears and her queenly pride, she flung herself with reckless gaiety into the whirl of her husband's profligate court. But her gaiety was all excitement; her wild spirits so unnatural that they broke up and almost destroyed those traits of deep feminine tenderness and womanly dignity that had at first rendered her so interesting.

And now the bad, bold Castlemain became in everything but name Queen of England. Catharine submitted to her empire without any of the fruitless struggles that had marked her bridal life. Together these two women were constantly seen before the people. They rode in the same carriage, promenaded

the same walks—danced in the same set. Indeed Charles seemed only desirous of parading his unmanly triumph over the moral sense of a frail woman before his subjects in a manner most degrading to himself and her.

Poor Francesca felt the evil effects of the change, and her palace life became more difficult of endurance than her free wanderings had been. The tranquillity for which she had struggled with all the might of her young heart, gave way from the time her eyes fell upon Lord Bowdon in the king's presence chamber. Then her heart spoke out in the single cry that rose from it as her look met his, and from that hour she became timid and restless as a prisoned bird who knows that its mate is hovering near the gilded bars of its cage. Oh! how eagerly she watched—how earnestly she hoped for his presence after that. How wild and groundless seemed the reasons that, in her cooler moments, had been enough to drive her from the shelter of Lord Bowdon's roof. The sweet hours that she had spent there—the words that he had uttered—the looks of love, so deep, so earnest, so pure, with which he had regarded her—all came back upon her memory with a vividness that made her heart tremble within her. Her soul seemed given up to one yearning wish—a wish to see and talk with him again.

But Lord Bowdon came no more to the palace. Suddenly as he presented himself did he seem to disappear from those kingly haunts, without a word or sign for her. She went to Guilo, for her soul absolutely panted for sympathy, and when the boy questioned her with his dark and loving eyes, she told him all—the keen suffering that she had endured, the restless desire that possessed her to see Lord Bowdon again.

Guilo listened to her with gentle attention; none of those gleams of jealous love that had formerly fired his eyes were discernible now. His new home oppressed him—he also had learned to contrast the meretricious glitter of a vicious court with the lofty and wholesome simplicity of their home at Bowdon. Compared with those that formed the household and visitors of the countess, Lord Bowdon seemed to the pure and simple heart of Guilo like an angel, whose wing might yet give holy shelter to him and his sister.

Guilo expressed all this to his Francesca as they sat together in the dim light of the queen's apartment, and the young girl was greatly comforted. But a new source of uneasiness arose to the gentle girl. It was long before she could be made fully aware that

the gallant speeches and studied attentions of Sir John Payton had any serious result in view; and when that gentleman did at last make his hopes fully understood, the young girl shrunk from him with absolute terror. She might never see Lord Bowdon again, but the very thought of another made her whole sensitive nature thrill painfully, as if an outrage had been offered to its idol. She refused Sir John with gentle dignity—a princess might have declined his homage with as few words, without compromising her pride. That Sir John was noble, handsome, comparatively rich, never entered her mind; her first impulse was one of pure surprise that he should have believed it possible that one who had ever lived beneath the same roof with Lord Bowdon, could be won to love another. She did not even tell Guilo that Sir John had sought her as his future wife, for, strange as it may seem, there was a feeling of humiliation connected with the idea that kept her silent. The poor minstrel girl in her simple ideas of human worth, could see nothing in the homage of a gay and petted court minion to excite her pride, or even gratitude.

But an object which Lady Castlemain had set her heart upon, was not likely to be thwarted by the quiet and gentle refusal of a young girl. Hating Francesca as she did everything that she fancied lay between her and an entire influence over the king—this haughty woman found in the disinclination of the maiden for the proposed marriage a new and malicious reason for urging it, and in her violent nature each caprice became a passion, and she bent every energy to the ruin of one helpless girl as if it had been a kingdom at stake.

The king, whose singular interest in Francesca had in nothing diminished, was greatly annoyed by the pertinacious dislike of the countess; and when Sir John Payton's proposal was laid before him, gladly encouraged it as the only means of removing the groundless jealousy of this unprincipled woman without absolute injury to the queen's favorite.

The queen too, with whom the bland manners and real gaiety of character possessed by young Payton, had rendered him a favorite, yielded all her gentle influence in forwarding his suit, and thus it happened that poor Francesca was at all times exposed to his unfortunate and most unwelcome attentions, till at length they almost amounted to persecution.

But now Francesca's time of trial was drawing close at hand. Sir John was impatient—the countess became resolute to accomplish the union she had determined on without delay; and Charles, worn out by her constant perseverance, was at last urged into using more active authority than was altogether pleasant to his indolent nature. He saw very plainly that in order to secure peace to himself this young girl must be sent from the court, or become the wife of Sir John. It was after a conversation with the countess, in which this subject had been urged with unusual violence, that Charles sent for Francesca to come before him.

Never in her life had the young girl entered the apartments of Lady Castlemain, and it was with a thrill almost of terror that she received the king's summons.

In the ante-room Francesca found her brother, who started from the cushions where he was sitting and came toward her eagerly, and with his hands extended as if he would have forced her back from a contact with the voluptuous atmosphere that pervaded the apartment, and in which he seemed drooping like a wild blossom transplanted from the cool brook-side to the sultry precincts of a hot-house.

Francesca greeted his approach with an agitated smile, and weaving her fingers quickly together told him how she came, and by whom summoned. The lad still seemed dissatisfied: he compressed his lips and mused an instant, then he drew close to Francesca's side, and made her comprehend that he would go with her to the king. Thankful even for this frail support Francesca linked her arm in his, and the two moved toward an opposite door slowly, and with the color ebbing from their cheeks at each step.

Charles was at one end of the dimly lighted and gorgeous saloon, sitting, or rather lounging among the purple cushions of an easy chair, and with one foot half buried in the fur of a small ermine rug, from which he had just indolently spurned a sleeping spaniel for the moment, an especial favorite with the countess.

The dog gave a howl, and, with his long silken ears trailing over the carpet, fled to his half angry mistress and nestled himself, still snarling at the king amid the crimson folds of her robe. Charles was enjoying the little creature's wrath with an indolent laugh, when the door opened and Francesca stood on the threshold leaning upon Guilo.

The king started, and the laugh died on his lips as he looked up. It might have been the peculiar light that streamed through the open door that produced that sudden change in his countenance, for the ante-room was hung with damask of a golden tint, and the sunshine that poured through fell in a rich, warm glow over the youthful figures, and floated softly away into the crimson atmosphere of the saloon, leaving them formed as it were in the golden wood-work of the door, with a back-ground of cloudy gold. Charles was a great lover of the arts, and it might have been the singular effect produced upon the twins by this light that took him by surprise. Certain it is the color left his swarth cheek, and his look for an instant was sharp and startled.

Both Guilo and his sister were in their Italian costume, a little modified on her part, and with the boy only rendered more strikingly picturesque by the rich materials and elaborate embroidery bestowed upon it by order of the prodigal countess. Of all the gauds and jewels which the countess delighted to lavish on her favorite pages, Guilo had only accepted a small poinard, whose hilt of chased gold glittered upon the left side of his girdle.

Whether it was the artistical effect and grouping of the orphans that excited the king's attention, or that they aroused some deeper and more powerful feelings, certain it is that Charles lost all his careless gaiety the moment they appeared. The same expression that had changed his face in the audience chamber came over it again, and deepened into strong and visible emotion as Francesca slowly crossed the room, leaving her brother by the door.

Oppressed, she knew not why, with a feeling of profound dread, as if she were about to part with some dear hope, Francesca approached the king, and bending one knee on the ermine rug at his feet, lifted her eyes to his face.

"You sent for me, sire!"

Charles did not answer, but his eyes were bent upon her upturned face earnestly, almost sternly. In that posture, and with her face turned toward the light, she seemed to arouse some feeling in his heart that broke through his harsh features with inexplicable force.

"If the king commanded your presence here," exclaimed the Countess of Castlemain, shaking the spaniel from her robe as she arose in violent anger, "it was to chide you for contumacious conduct in his court—it was to order obedience in future. Arise, minion, in this saloon you kneel not audaciously to be gazed at thus!"

Francesca turned her large eyes upon the insolent woman with a look of calm and modest dignity, that would have brought the blood to a less brazen cheek. She was about to arise, but the king laid his large hand upon her head and prevented the movement.

"Not yet!" he said, in a subdued and kindly voice. "There was something in that face that made me forget why it was thou wert summoned hither. It was but an old memory, my lady countess, and should not have brought down all this storm of wrath upon the poor child."

"Is the creature brought hither to brave and insult me?" exclaimed the countess.

"She must have a marvelous degree of courage to venture on that!" replied Charles, with a provoking smile.

"Permit me to withdraw!" said Francesca, rising; "nothing but a summons from your majesty, which none dare disobey, could have brought me hither!"

"And so," cried the countess, clenching her hand with rage: "and so the nicety of a strolling singer is touched by a visit to the Castlemain; his majesty should understand that taunt, I think."

"Oddsfish, my lady countess, his majesty will soon be incapable of understanding anything if this storm continues. Upon my soul I have almost forgotten the object for which you would have me send for the poor child."

"Your highness seems to have forgotten everything but her face!" muttered the countess, beginning to feel that by this unseemly violence she was defeating her own object. "Methinks her obstinate refusal to accept the marvelous good fortune offered by Sir John Payton should have made a deeper impression."

"Ay, there it is now; what, pretty one, can be your objection to the very flower and favorite of our court? Know you not there is scarce a lady in our kingdom who would not deem the offer of his hand a piece of rare fortune?"

"I cannot so deem it!" said Francesca, quietly.

"And wherefore, maiden?"

"It is easy guessing why?" sneered the countess.

"I do not love Sir John," answered Francesca, without giving any token that she marked the cruel sneer, save by her rising color.

"But he loves you."

"I think not, sire."

"Then why should he seek you?"

"Nay, I cannot tell; but it is not from love, my own heart tells me that."

"Oddsfish, girl; but it would be difficult guessing what other reason he can have."

"It is difficult; I cannot account for it!"

The king gazed earnestly upon her.

"So young, without friends, penniless, this refusal is more than strange," he muttered. "Why, child, do you know that it seems like mid-summer madness, unless indeed," Charles paused and looked keenly in her face, it was pale and quiet as marble: "unless indeed," he added, impressively, "Cupid has been early with his bird bolts in another quarter!"

Instantly that pale face was flushed to a burning crimson, and with his keen glance Charles saw that a shiver flashed like electricity through the young girl's frame. The slow, downward sweep of her inky lashes but half concealed the fire that seemed melting away in her eyes. Nothing on earth could have been more thrillingly beautiful than the change that came over her.

She loved, that young girl, so beautiful, so rich in delicate feeling, how she must have loved to change and tremble, and show this only with the bare consciousness that her passion was guessed at. And who was the object of this exquisite passion?

She had lived in his court entirely isolated and almost constantly in the queen's apartments—save with himself and Sir John Payton she had seldom been known to exchange a word. Sir John Payton she had refused—who then could it be that had excited the first beautiful love of a heart so young and pure? Who?

The answer came to his heart with a shock that made it thrill as it had not done for many long years. His swarthy cheeks grew dark with color, and when he lifted his eyes they fell beneath the fierce, sneering glance with which the countess was regarding him.

What a contrast those two females presented as they stood before the monarch. The one majestic, nay, fierce in her imperious beauty, her white arms shackled with jewels, and folded over a bosom heaving with rage, and but half covered with the blood red folds of her velvet robe. The other, shrinking with sensitive shame, her slight figure swaying like a willow branch; her face, neck and hands crimson with blushes, and every nerve in her body tremulous as the stem of a wild blossom. Charles, with all his follies and his vices, was a man to feel this contrast with a sense of strong inward shame. He was deeply grieved at the pain he had unwittingly brought upon the young girl, and would have given half his kingdom for the power to shield her confusion from the unfeminine scrutiny of the woman who stood triumphing over it.

"Some other time," said Charles, striving in vain to give dignity and steadiness to his voice and manner: "some other time we will talk more of this matter."

Francesca took these words as a dismissal, and casting one grateful glance at the king, she drew back glad to quit a scene which had been full of

distress to her; but the countess stepped forward and laid one hand upon her shoulder, grasping it till the poor girl shrunk with pain.

"Now! Your highness, now, and here, let this matter be settled. Why glaze over that which every one about the court can see is her true reason for refusing Sir John? If I am to be supplanted by a thing like this," and the fierce woman touched the burning cheek of Francesca scornfully with the tip of her finger—"let it be proclaimed at once, as I will proclaim it from one end of England to the other, that the queen, the pure, high-minded bride who refused to admit the Countess of Castlemain into her presence, has taken into her very bed chamber a low, strolling singer, whom she fosters and fondles, knowing her to be the minion of her royal husband. It will speak well for the queen—it will exalt the royalty of England in the eyes of the nation."

"It will seal the infamy of the lip that utters it!" said Charles, turning sternly upon the countess. "Peace, madam, or you never see my face again!"

"Perhaps not!" replied the countess, insolently; "but in that case all England shall see the very pleasant and touching letters with which it has been your majesty's pleasure to address me in times gone by."

Charles bit his lip till it grew white beneath the pressure of his teeth. When from very pain he was forced to unlock his hold, an epithet of blistering scorn broke from him, and he turned toward Francesca. The poor girl stood perfectly motionless, frozen, as it were, into marble by the world of infamy that had been opened to her through the lips of that hardened woman. Her cheeks, at a moment before so full of fire, were now cold and deathly white—her lips were parted as in terror, and her hands fell helplessly downward. She uttered no word—she forgot that it was the king who stood before her, but turned and walked from the room.

Guilo had been watching the scene. His quick eye detected much that was sealed to his hearing. You might have seen his face kindle when Francesca grew animated, and when she turned white with anguish, he too became pallid as a corpse. Once, and only once he moved from his station by the door, that was when the countess laid her hand upon Francesca's shoulder. At that moment Guilo stepped forward with a low cry, and half drew the poinard from his girdle, but the woman instantly undid her grasp, and Guilo thrust back his poinard in its sheath unseen by the persons whose movements had so excited him.

Francesca's eyes fell upon her brother as she passed through the door. She reached forth her hand with a warm smile, and leaning upon him for support, passed into the ante-room. Here, however, Francesca's strength gave way: she had only power to reach the embrasure of a window, where she sat down, breathing hard, and making a vain effort to collect her thoughts. Guilo stood by her wondering at this strange agitation, for to him it seemed without adequate cause. The ante-room opening directly upon the saloon most used by the countess, was generally occupied only by a single page, stationed there to announce the approach of those persons whom her

ladyship wished to see. This post was assigned to Guilo, whose infirmity, she supposed, would secure the countess against the usual eves-dropping propensities of his class. Thus it happened that the brother and sister were alone in the chamber, though in a larger room beyond some half score of pages might have been observed loitering upon the cushioned benches, and playing at various games with all the airs of mimic courtiers bent on ruining themselves.

Guilo closed the door which led to this room, and returned to the window where Francesca was sitting. But scarcely had he twined his fingers in order to make the first eager inquiry, when the door was flung open again, and a page ushered in with considerable ceremony Sir John Payton and a young female, who from her changing color and eager glances from object to object, seemed but little accustomed to the luxurious elegance that surrounded her.

When Francesca saw the young baronet she started up surprised and aglashed. Her first impulse was to rush from the room, for in the state of high nervous excitement that shook her frame, she beheld the handsome noble with absolute terror. But there was no method by which she could leave the chamber without presenting herself before Sir John, and what was worse, drawing the attention from all the malapert pages in the ante-chamber to her discomposure. Struck with this thought, she shrunk back into the deep embrasure; and Guilo, who saw her terror, let a few waves of the silken drapery fall lower down, thus offering greater chance of concealment for her person. Sir John, who had paused near the entrance, and was addressing his companion in a low voice, now turned his attention to Guilo, and beckoned him forward with a smile. With one of those signs rendered easy by his familiarity with the household, he inquired if any one was with the countess.

Guilo answered that the king was within. Sir John looked greatly pleased, and turning to his companion spoke a few rapid words, which brought the bright blood to her cheek, and were uttered in his usual tone, for poor Guilo's infirmity rendered all caution unnecessary; and the young courtier was quite unconscious of Francesca's presence.

But Francesca, amid all her agitation, heard the words that brought the blood so warmly into the young countrywoman's cheek, and her heart sickened within her at the treacherous tenderness they expressed. It was another weave of the vicious life that surrounded her. She began to feel as if her own high nature were withering and contaminated by the untruth of others. The very air of the court seemed weighed down with moral contagion. To her excited ideas the lowest hedge in England, with pure, wild blossoms around, and the pure breath of Heaven above, seemed preferable to her palace life.

But a slight rustling of the window drapery as the young girl shrunk closer behind it, was the only warning given to Sir John that a sickened and indignant heart was beating so near; and he was too completely occupied with his companion to notice the faint sound. He took the young countrywoman's hand in his, and almost bent his lips upon it, but seeing that Guilo regarded him with a sharp and

earnest look, he merely bent over the little hand and with the color in his cheek slightly deepening, motioned the page to announce his presence to the countess.

Guilo flung open the door leading to the saloon, and made his usual signal. After a moment he drew back, and Sir John passed in, leaving the female behind in the ante-room.

At first Eunice Bruce was occupied by a curious examination of the room. The heavy gilded cornices—the rich hangings—the pictures, glowing in their princely frames, seemed to bewilder and delight her. She pressed her dainty foot upon the carpet, seemingly rather doubtful if it were not wood-moss and wild blossoms that she trod upon. She sunk her dimpled little hand into the velvet cushions; and once or twice, as she cast her eyes upon some of the pictures, you could see the rosy glow of a blush float over her neck and face. At length she seemed beset with a feminine desire to examine the window drapery, and approaching the embrasure where Francesca stood, gathered up the masses of glowing silk in her hand, but started back with a faint exclamation on finding that she stood face to face with a stranger.

For one moment the two young creatures brought so strangely together, stood gazing at each other. Francesca started and pale—Eunice all in a glow of confusion, and blushing crimson to the temples. This natural embarrassment gave way directly to an expression of mingled pleasure, doubt and surprise. She looked from Guilo to the young girl, and again at the youth, as if running over some idea rapidly in her mind that already trembled on her lips. She had often heard the domestics at Bowdon describe the singular beauty of these orphans—their striking resemblance to each other, and the attachment that existed between them. You could see by the changing of her face that doubt with regard to their identity was fast resolving itself into conviction, that some generous and impulsive resolve was entering her warm, little heart.

"Are you? I am sure you are Francesca, the orphan—the young lady who was shipwrecked at Bowdon?" said the kind-hearted little woman, and she began to tremble with the eager delight of her discovery. "If you are the same—if indeed this handsome youth is your brother—speak to me—trust me. Indeed you may—I am your friend—I know Lord Bowdon—we were playmates together—I saw him only yesterday."

Eunice had spoken all this very rapidly, and as it were in a single breath. She looked eagerly at Guilo and smiled. She turned to Francesca and smiled still, but tears, eager, bright tears sprang to her eyes, and seizing the young girl's hand, she pressed it warmly to her lips.

"Yesterday," faltered Francesca, and a glow came to her marble cheek, but it faded instantly away, and withdrawing her hand from Eunice, she added in a cold and changed voice, "but you came here, madam, with Sir John Payton!"

Eunice seemed greatly dissatisfied.

"I know—I know," she said, eagerly, "and here is no time or place to tell you how it chanced. But

do believe me it is for your good, and to serve Lord Bowdon that I come hither at all; no one else could bring me but this silken courtier. I know his hollow-ness—I know, better even than you do, all his plans regarding you. Will you not trust me?—does this great palace contain so many honest friends that you can cast aside a real desire to love and serve you so readily?"

"Alas—alas, we have no friends here; no home anywhere," exclaimed Francesca, clasping her hands, and overcome by the sense of her utter loneliness unconsciously aroused by the offered kindness of a stranger.

"At Bowdon all were your friends, from the highest to the lowest," answered Eunice, taking Francesca's now unresisting hand. "Why did you leave those who loved you so much?"

"Why—why, alas!" cried Francesca, and the tears streamed down her cheeks. "We fled from our own hearts—we fled from the shadow of evil to meet its substance here. Oh, madam, madam, if you knew what has been said to me this day, and yonder in the very presence of an English monarch. You might well ask me why we fled from Bowdon, my poor brother and I. Oh! would to Heaven we had never left it, or died before we came hither—hither in this stately charnel house, where I must prepare and wed the man my very soul loathes, or be branded before the world—the world where Lord Bowdon lives—as a thing such—such as any woman would blush to name, save that one in yonder."

Francesca spoke with vehemence, her eyes sparkled, and her cheeks burned beneath the tears that drenched them.

"And have they urged you thus?" cried Eunice, with generous indignation. "Would they force you to this union?"

"Worse—oh! how much worse!" answered Francesca.

"One word, a single question, dear, young lady, not for myself, but for one who loves you as well, nay, better than a sister. Say to me in words, is this marriage with Sir John so very bitter, could you not think of it with some degree of content?"

"Listen to me and you shall hear," said Francesca, checking her tears and speaking with firm emphasis. "When you saw me—aye, before—I had made my resolve. You see my brother—my poor, poor Guilo—young as I am—so helpless, and—oh, Heavens! how dear. Once, it is not many months since, I sat by the boy, and saw him at my feet perishing from lack of food—pale, trembling, his mouth parched—his limbs strengthless. We had no shelter, no home, no bread—I would have given the last pulse in my heart for a single crust of food to save Guilo. That time a poor woman gave us nourishment and a roof, but the same want came again. We were wanderers on the earth—two children whom the storm had cast upon a strange shore. One day we sat beneath a hedge—Guilo and I—within sight of London. We were hungry, but a cup of cold water was all that the world had to give us. Faint and weary, I turned to Guilo and laid his head in my lap, hoping, almost praying that we might perish there and then. Strength, hope

youth, all were swallowed up, we only asked to die. From that hedge we were brought hither to this home of kings! Can you think what the change was to us? Can you dream how my poor heart glowed and swelled with grateful feelings to those who had brought back life to the heart, strength to the limbs of my poor Guilo? It was not gratitude but worship that I felt for the queen, the king, all that had scattered a portion of their golden sunshine on the head of my gentle brother. For a time all here, that seems so bright to you, was beautiful to me. My brother no longer turned his hungry gaze upon me, as I sat with his head on my lap, he was happy, and I—"

"Wert happy also, until Sir John Payton came with his mischievous proposals," said Eunice, as she saw that the young girl hesitated.

"You see my brother, his eyes are bright, his cheek is warm with health. Can you imagine how terrible it must be to drag him hence to wander over the earth again to be athirst, hungry, shelterless? Well, think of this, and then say if I do not loathe the thought of a union with Sir John, for rather than wed him—rather than yield my fame to the lips of yonder woman—I and Guilo go forth on the morrow—forth upon the wide world to suffer, perchance to die!"

Francesca ceased speaking, her hands were clasped, her head drooped downward, and large tears rolled slowly over her cheek. Eunice began to sob, her hands trembled while she gathered the cold fingers of Francesca between them, as if she were determined to impart some of her own bounding hopes to the orphan.

"Yes—go," she said, "leave this place: run away from Sir John, the king, everybody here. It is the easiest way, and just the very best thing to be done; but as for hedges and hunger, the wide world, and all that—why is there no place like Bethna in Great Britain? Is not John Bruce a man of substance, without chick or child to share it with? Am not I, Eunice Bruce, held of some consequence both at Bethna and at Bowdon? Come and live with us—the old house is so large that John and I get lost in it. Besides you will be so useful; John is fond of music, and if you could manage to teach that lute of yours a few psalm tunes for him when he happens to be in the house, and would not be put out at a habit he has of singing through the nose—he got it in old Noll's army, nothing could be more delightful. Then there is the beautiful boy—what could have happened better than his not being able to hear or talk! He will not tire of long prayers in the morning, nor put John out by asking questions and yawning as I do sometimes when the good man reads a homily with twelve heads in the old hall. Now the idea has come into my brain, it seems wonderful that we have ever got along at Bethna without you."

While Eunice was thus talking herself out of breath, and urging the most generous hospitality upon a person whom she had never seen before, Francesca felt all her reserve yield to the pure warmth of kindness so evidently sincere and earnest. Her cold fingers grew animated, and clasped the plump hands that gave them a cheering shake now and then, as Eunice became more and more earnest. Her heavy eyes brightened,

and with a gush of grateful tears she bent forward and leaned her face upon Eunice's shoulder. Instantly the white arm of Eunice Bruce was flung around the weeping girl, and, drawing her close to a bosom now swelling with generous pleasure, the Puritan's wife bent her rosy mouth and whispered, "oh, Lord Bowdon will love his playmate the better for having held you thus!"

Eunice knew that it was wrong in her to say this, bound in faith as Lord Bowdon was to another—but, for her life, she could not have kept the words back; nor, we much fear, did she experience proper prudence when she felt the warm blood swelling and glowing over the cheek her lips pressed while she breathed the imprudent words.

Francesca rose from the embrace of her new friend, for with her pure and lofty nature she could have no doubt of kindness natural and generous as that displayed by Eunice Bruce.

"You will go with us to Bethna!" said Eunice, not quite removing her arm.

"Yes, we will go! wherever it is: Guilo and I will be grateful and content; to-night I must explain all to my brother. Until now I have kept this cause of sorrow from his knowledge. Thank God, and thanks—oh! many thanks to you—he will not be required to starve and suffer for me again."

"Now," said Eunice, remembering how brief was the time that might be allowed her. "It is settled that you leave this place. But how shall we manage to get you both away? Were you ever in London?"

"Never!"

"That is unfortunate; but you and Guilo there can manage to leave the palace almost any time."

"Yes, we are allowed much freedom: nearly every evening we pass together."

"There is no one here whom you will grieve for, I dare say?"

"The queen has ever been kind, more than kind till this unfortunate proposal of Sir John's. She is not less generous now, but thinks that I feel too keenly obstinate and ungrateful. She is not happy—this good queen—and it will go against my heart to leave her as I must."

"She is good—she is generous—why not tell her the truth?" said Eunice.

Francesca mused a moment, and answered with a beaming eye.

"And so I will, for no one ever trusted Catharine in vain. I will tell her of the language used by yonder woman—nay, not all—that I could not bring my tongue to utter, but the good queen shall know that I do not abandon my post without just cause."

"That is well," answered Eunice; "now listen, to-morrow night there is a moon, I believe. Between nine and ten come with Guilo to the nearest point upon the river. John will be there with some sort of water-craft—and I, yes, I will come also, for if any thing should happen wrong the poor, dear man might not know exactly how to manage without me; besides I don't think he ever ran away with a young lady in his life!"

"We will be punctual," said Francesca, smiling in spite of her anxiety.

"Hush," answered Eunice, lifting her finger, "there seems to be some stir near the door. I am to have an audience with the great folks in yonder, you must know, and Sir John may come forth at any moment; let the curtain drop a little more thus, ha!"

That instant the door opened, and Sir John Payton looked eagerly round for Eunice, who went forward to meet him with a bright look and free step as when she was gathering roses in the grounds of Bowdon in her joy, the excitement of her interview with Francesca had suppressed all timidity.

The baronet spoke a few words it would seem of encouragement to the pretty dame, and they passed into the saloon together.

A few minutes after the king came out, evidently somewhat restored to his good humor; as he passed Guilo the monarch paused, laid his hand caressingly on the boy's head, and seemed as if he would have spoken had he possessed the means of making himself understood. But after looking earnestly into the young face, he passed on with a more thoughtful shade of countenance.

A little time after this Francesca stole away making a sign for Guilo to seek her apartments that evening. The lad had not watched long at his post when the door opened again and forth came the young baronet, leading Eunice by the hand. He seemed in high spirits, and Eunice was smiling, but around her pretty mouth there lay an expression that was not all mirth, some deeper feeling now and then flitted across the sunshine of her merry features.

No word passed between the two till they had passed both ante-chambers, and were on their way out of the palace.

"Now," said Sir John, in a soft and persuasive voice, "your husband is secure of his home, fair dame. This kind office have we performed in his behalf. The king's own word has been pledged."

"Yes," answered Eunice, with a mischievous laugh—"his majesty for so ill-favored a man is in sooth very gracious; only methinks he presses the hand somewhat longer when he raises one from her knee than is absolutely necessary."

"Indeed!" said Sir John, in a tone that brightened the roguish twinkle in her tormentor's eye, "I observed nothing of it!"

"Nay, it was not likely, but I do believe my poor fingers are crimson now from the care his majesty took to raise me safely from his feet."

"Well, pretty dame, you will not need to seek the presence again, so his highness will have no further opportunity to exercise his gallantry."

"Nay, but the court is a beautiful place—and the king, his eyes now are like eagles; and his hair—if he would but cast aside that awkward peruke—I dare say is black as a raven's wing to match the eyes—besides it seems to me that a king cannot well be

ugly. Are you quite sure, Sir John, that Bethna is safe from the spoiler, and that it may not be needful for us to see his majesty again?"

"Quite sure," answered Sir John, drily.

"But if it should chance that anything is wanting to satisfy John Bruce, I should much prefer when we go to the palace again, that your proud lady should not be there watching every look with her great, flashing eyes. It destroys all the pleasure of an audience—indeed it does, Sir John!"

"And perhaps you would prefer that I too should be absent," answered Sir John, in a tone of jealous rage.

"Oh, if you could manage that now!" replied Eunice, in a tone of the most innocent simplicity.

Sir John shut his teeth hard, muttering between them—"the little imp, who would have thought one interview would have done this?"

Eunice heard the sound, and guessed in her heart how complimentary the words might be, but this only induced a little inward laugh and a sly glance at Sir John's clouded brow, that she was very careful he did not encounter.

It is not our purpose to relate the conversation that passed between the two during their passage over the river, but when they parted at her lodgings Eunice Bruce was very serious, and seemed to have been talking to some effect, for as Sir John relinquished her hand, he said—

"To-morrow you shall be convinced that I wed this maiden but to obtain that power and wealth which shall leave no wish ungratified to the object of my real love. Though it is cruel, Eunice, that your shrewish suspicion should drive me to this pass."

"Well, to-morrow let it be, or at once will I put an end to all this fine talk," answered Eunice.

"But remember in doing this I place honor, nay, perchance life, in your hands!"

"Your honor is safe with me as my own, Sir John Payton—your life, may it yet be a bright and happy one. At any rate in trusting Eunice Bruce you shall suffer nothing."

There was feeling and unmistakable sincerity in the little dame's reply, it absolutely seemed as if tears trembled in her voice.

"I will trust you with everything," answered Sir John, well pleased to find that she had at length been brought to speak earnestly. "To-morrow shall you know all the reasons of interest—for as I live, sweet dame, my heart is all yours—which have induced my proposal to this young Italian."

"Then till to-morrow, good night," was the reply, and Eunice passed through the door which a grave looking serving man held open for her.

(TO BE CONCLUDED.)

LOST AND FOUND.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

Concluded from Page 179.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1817, by Edward Stephens, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.]

CHAPTER XIX.

"It is an old tale and often told."—MARMION.

"WELL, Clarkson, who waits without?" demanded King Charles, pausing in his walk up and down the royal cabinet, as a gentleman of the chambers presented himself.

"Your highness, many whom I denied admission—having your majesty's command to that effect. But here is the young Earl of Bowdon just come in: will it please your highness to see him now?"

"Yes—send the earl in; and hark ye, dismiss the others to my Lord Clarendon. I am in no mood for petitions."

The gentlemen of the chambers bowed and withdrew, wondering at the clouded countenance and emphatic manner, so unlike the usual indifference of the good natured monarch.

"I misdoubt that you will have a stormy reception, my lord," said the man, as he marshaled Lord Bowdon to the royal closet. "I have seldom seen the king's countenance so fiercely dark."

"Indeed," answered the young earl, with a grave smile, "that might be unfortunate had I favors to ask—but now——"

The sad smile died on Lord Bowdon's countenance: he did not finish the sentence, for they were close to the royal closet. The door opened, and King Charles came forward as if eager to abbreviate the formal ceremonials of reception, and enter upon the business that brought the young earl before him.

"My lord," he said, scarcely giving the earl an opportunity to bend his knee, "at another time we might find just reason for offence that you have so long absented yourself from the court, but now—having as we gravely suspect deeper cause of displeasure—we let that subject pass."

"I am at a loss—I cannot even conjecture any cause for displeasure that your highness can have against me!" answered Lord Bowdon, with modest firmness.

Charles turned and looked keenly in the young earl's face. The gravity and confusion which he found there served partially to dispel the frown from his own dark brow.

"My lord," he said, somewhat less sternly than he had spoken before, "you will remember that on recovering the estates of Bowdon at our hands, you were informed that there had been pledges given and conditions made between your noble father and

his king, which you, my lord, would be expected to redeem. Need I recall to your mind what these obligations were?"

"No, your highness, they have never for a moment left my memory. Sacred as the love I bore my noble father—as the fealty due my king do I hold every pledge given by his dying breath. I only wonder that your majesty can for a moment speak as if there existed a doubt of this!"

"And yet, my lord, knowing your hand and affections pledged to a lady of your father's choice, methinks you held that pledge in little respect when Bowdon Castle is made the place of refuge to every demoiselle who may seek shelter there in order to evade the king's wishes."

"I do not understand your highness," answered Lord Bowdon, with a look of profound surprise.

"There may be a mistake in this, though it scarcely seems possible!" said Charles, fixing his black eyes searchingly upon the earl. "Last night, my lord, a young lady who has been for sometime placed near the queen's person, and in whom her majesty has much affectionate interest, left privately the court. With her went a young lad, her brother, who had been placed in the service of Lady Castlemain. These young persons at one time, we learn, were inmates of Bowdon: it is but reasonable to suppose that they have sought shelter with its lord."

Lord Bowdon mastered the emotions these words excited, and his reply, save to a very nice ear, might have sounded perfectly composed.

"No, your highness, the poor young creatures have neither sought shelter at Bowdon nor with its lord, and if they had, still must my honor stand unimpeached, since I come this morning only to desire leave to travel for a time."

"But your engagement, Lord Bowdon."

"That would I fulfil at once with the permission of your highness and the lady."

Again the king's brow was clouded: he bent his eyes on the floor, and over his swarth cheek the blood glowed dusky. Some inward perplexity was at work within him.

"I know not how this can well be, my lord. The lady, you know, is of foreign birth. She should have been in England months ago, and ready to fulfil the contract of marriage existing between you."

"I was led so to expect!"

"The delay is unaccountable; for months no tidings either of the lady or her family have reached England."

A few weeks since I sent a favorite and special messenger to learn the cause of this delay. Until his return we must be content to wait, my lord."

Lord Bowdon drew a deep breath, and for an instant the color came brightly to his cheeks. The king looked at him again with that keen, searching glance.

"Methinks you do not seem greatly distressed by this necessary postponement," he said, somewhat sternly.

"Sire, I have never seen the lady!"

"But when you have seen her, unless her womanhood belies the promise of a more tender age, this coldness will give way. It must not be a marriage of hands without hearts, my lord."

"Sire," answered Lord Bowdon, with gentle dignity, "I have but now expressed my readiness to fulfil every claim upon my honor—every shadow of a promise given by my father will I redeem; but hearts are stubborn things, I may not pledge myself to love the lady to whom, unseen, my hand was plighted!"

The king bent his brow and turned away with an impatient gesture, very unusual to him, then as suddenly confronting the earl again, he said—

"You love another, sir!—else why this certainty that your bride cannot possess your heart?"

The blood slowly mounted to Lord Bowdon's forehead. He answered steadily and without hesitation,

"I will deceive neither the lady nor those who have an interest in her welfare—I do love another!"

"And that other?"

"Sire, the humblest of your subjects has a right to the uncontrolled secrets of his own heart. All that is incumbent on an honorable man to say I have said, more you will not desire of me!"

"Sir earl, this lady is not one to content herself with half a heart."

"Your majesty, of all men on earth, should know that our affections are not to be controlled by state policy or family compact."

Charles knit his brow, but instantly the frown gave way to his usual good humored smile.

"Odsfsh, but there is more truth than courtesy in what you say. Still on one point we would be satisfied—at least you can answer us that this pretty foreign girl, this runaway demoiselle has nothing—ha! my lord, that blush answers for you."

"It admits nothing that an honorable man should shrink from acknowledging," answered Lord Bowdon, greatly hurt.

"It is strange," muttered the king, as if speaking to himself, "this pretty creature so humble, without family, fortune—in short, a lonely beggar, has made more havoc among our nobles than the most beautiful and high born lady of our court. One day Payton is on his knees beseeching for her hand. The next—well, my lord, you will have time to conquer this plebeian caprice before your bride arrives—meantime—"

The king was interrupted by a gentleman of the household, who knocked timidly at the door.

"Sire," said the usherer, "there is a young woman and a strange looking man in the court, who refuse to go away until I have given their message to your

majesty. The woman insists that she has business of the greatest importance, which nothing shall prevent her placing before your highness!"

"Is the dame young?" inquired Charles, with a careless laugh.

"Not more than twenty, or perhaps a year or two added to that, sire."

"And is her face presentable?"

"Comely and bright as a rose, your highness."

"Nay, we cannot send her to Clarendon then—after my Lord of Bowdon passes out you may bring her hither. We were neither king nor gentlemen to keep youth and beauty waiting in our palace court."

"And the man, sire!"

"Odsfsh! let him stay where he is!"

The gentleman withdrew quietly and grave as he had presented himself, but as he crossed the ante-chamber a broad smile, which court etiquette had checked till then, stole over his face.

Charles saw him depart, and then turned to Lord Bowdon, who had listened to this dialogue with a beating heart, for something told him that his own fate was interested in the words so carelessly spoken. He saw that the king with characteristic agitation had become impatient for his departure, and prepared quietly to withdraw.

"Another time," said Charles, as he carelessly surrendered his hand to the young noble, "another time we must talk further of this matter, for rest assured it touches the affections of your king more nearly than you can imagine."

As Lord Bowdon crossed the ante-chamber he met the man Clarkson, and in his company Eunice Bruce. She gave a little start on seeing him, and the color came more brightly into her face; but though he paused to give her an opportunity of speaking, she passed on with a smile, and entered the royal closet.

Charles, never careless of his personal appearance where women were concerned, had with a sort of masculine coquetry occupied the moments after Lord Bowdon's departure, in arranging the glossy curls of his peruke a little more over his shoulders, and had settled the ruffles of rich point around his hands that the gossamer shadows might draw attention from their size, and temper the too glowing brilliancy of several magnificent jewels that burned upon his fingers. He sat down too in a large, easy chair away from the slanting light, and thus in an attitude at once graceful and imposing, received Eunice Bruce as she entered the closet.

"Ha! the little rose-bud from Cornwall as I am a crowned king," exclaimed Charles, in a tone of well pleased surprise, as Eunice paused by the door trembling, and with her cheeks all in a glow of crimson, for she had not anticipated the entire solitude which surrounded the gallant monarch. Charles, who was really kind-hearted in trifles, took compassion on her confusion, though there was something so fresh and naive in it that he was half tempted to prolong the scene. He arose, however, and taking the little hand that still rested on the door-latch as if she half meditated a flight, led her respectfully toward his chair.

Without relinquishing her hand Charles sat down,

and Eunice, trembling and with tears in her eyes, sunk quietly to her knees at his feet.

"Nay, my pretty dame, what cause can there be for tears? Is there anything so terrible about the king that it should bring drops of terror into the eyes of a beautiful woman when she finds herself at his feet?"

"Sire—sire, do not speak to me thus: do not call me beautiful, I did not come for that. Indeed—indeed it does not please me, though you are a great monarch, and I a simple, country dame."

Charles smiled, nay, almost laughed outright. There was something so natural, so purely earnest in the tone and look with which the little woman deprecated his gallant compliments, that he was both amused and flattered by it.

"Nay, pretty one, it were depriving the king of his sweetest prerogative were he forbidden to admire and love beauty wherever it is found."

Charles bent his large, black eyes upon the face of Eunice Bruce as he spoke, and in their flashing glance the young woman might have read how deep and ardent was his admiration of her beauty. She met the glance, but it only checked the tears in her eyes, and sent every vestige of color from her face.

"Sire!" she said, trembling from head to foot, but not with confusion now—"sire, it was words like these that won poor Lady Alice to her ruin!"

Had a bullet passed into the bosom of Charles Stewart he could not have turned more deathly pale. He dropped the little hand that was growing cold in his, and half starting from his chair fell back again with his eyes fixed upon that pale and drooping face, for Eunice was terrified by the effect of her words, and dared not look up. For the duration of a minute, perhaps, the two remained thus, he gazing upon her with a startled, half wild look, she trembling beneath his glance.

"And who told you? What know you of the Lady Alice?" said the king, at length forcing himself to speak.

Eunice put aside her mantle, and drew from beneath its folds a casket of coral veined and clasped with gold.

"Sire!" she said, in a low, but steady voice, "it is now many months since a vessel was wrecked upon the coast of Cornwall, close by Bowdon Castle. Two persons only were saved from the wreck, a youth and a young maiden who proved to be brother and sister."

"I know," said the king, "but what then? What had these persons to do with Lady Alice?"

"Nothing—nothing, for then the Lady Alice was dead. Lady Alice, the mother of these two children, was cast on shore by the storm—she was lifeless, but to her person this casket was lashed. Open it, sire, for in it there is a letter under your own hand, requiring the unhappy lady to embark for England with her children. In it there is a picture of your highness, and one of a lady so beautiful that it makes me weep to look upon it. There are many letters too, all going to prove that the poor lady cast dead upon the cold rocks of Cornwall, was the Lady Alice whom you wronged, the mother of your children. Oh! look

upon these things, sire, they will make you weep, and it seems to me that tears would be good for you now."

Eunice pressed the casket into one of the nerveless hands that had fallen upon the king's lap, the other was raised to his eyes, and she saw that all the lower part of his face was of that cold, dusky white, which gives to the pallor of a dark hued person a peculiar gloom that few can bear to contemplate.

Eunice was awe-stricken with these marks of terrible anguish, and rising to her feet she stood beside the king, trembling and pale with generous compassion.

"Oh! sire, if you could but bring yourself to look on the picture—I would give the world to see you cry!"

She knelt down once more and kissed the hand which held the casket, and her tears dropped upon the coral. Good, generous Eunice Bruce, she was not afraid to kiss that pale hand. It was not the king, the gallant Charles Stewart, but the suffering man that she pitied. In her compassion the noble-hearted little woman forgot everything.

Charles felt the kiss on his hand, and the tears that fell from the eyes of Eunice Bruce seemed to flow directly on his heart. A large drop gathered in his aching eyes, and rolled slowly from beneath his hand. Eunice saw it.

"Oh, this will do him good," she said, inly to herself, and a smile flashed through her tears. "Dear, dear, but it was dreadful to see him so still and pale, now I will go away—he will be better alone."

Eunice arose softly and glided toward the door.

"Not now: do not leave me yet," said Charles, aroused from his grief by the slight noise that she made. "I have some questions to ask: wait patiently till I can remember what they are."

Eunice drew gently back, and retiring to a distant part of the room, waited for the king to address her again—but for a time he seemed forgetful of her presence, so profound was his grief, so bitter the reflections that crowded upon his memory. Thus minute after minute went by, leaving those two persons so strangely thrown together in profound silence, interrupted only by a sharp breath that now and then broke from the bosom of Charles Stewart, bespeaking more keen suffering than a sob or groan could have done.

At length the king arose, and placing the casket on a table, touched the spring and drew forth its contents. His hands shook as he unfolded one or two of the papers, and after a hasty and painful glance at the miniatures, he crowded the whole into the casket again, and thrusting it into the bosom of his dress, turned toward Eunice.

"Come hither," he said, in a low and gentle voice, "come hither and tell me all that you know of this unhappy lady: and yet I know already she perished in the storm. The delicate lady was cast ashore, torn by the rocks, tangled over with coarse sea weeds—she, so beautiful, so rich in womanly love. Tell me—where did they bury her?"

"There is an old stone cross near Bowdon planted beneath an oak tree on the shore, how and when no

one alive can remember. They buried the lady there as her poor children desired. When I saw it the grave was blue with violets, which they had planted."

"And was this all the grave England could give to thee, my poor Alice?" murmured the king, bending his face that Eunice might not see the anguish too visible upon it.

"Lord Bowdon would have laid her in the family vault, but her children prayed that it might be otherwise, and he would thwart their wishes in nothing," she said.

"J ord Bowdon—oh! I remember—these poor children were his guests," said Charles, and the grief-stricken expression of his face gradually changed to one of keen, almost passionate interest. "Did he know aught of this?—was it from him you obtained the casket?"

"Lord Bowdon, up to this moment, does not even guess at the secret that casket contains. He never saw, never dreamed of its existence. With his own arm, and at the peril of his life, he rescued Francesca from the waters that had devoured so many souls that night. But for that good, that noble young man, she and the beautiful boy would have perished with the rest."

"He is good—he is noble—and he loves her!"—the last words were uttered only in thought, but they shed a luminous and noble expression to the face of Charles Stewart. But doubt and curiosity soon took possession of him again. Francesca, Guilo, where might they be found? They had fled, and he had no clue by which to trace their retreat—he thought of all the indignity that had been heaped upon that poor girl by the haughty Castlemain. He remembered that Guilo, his own son, had been degraded into the menial of that base and ignoble woman, and that by his own consent and connivance. Then wrath and humiliation mingled with his grief. The high-born and self-sacrificing Lady Alice seemed mingling reproaches in his ear for the ignominy he had allowed that woman—base in birth, and base in nature—to heap upon her children. From that moment the imperious power of Lady Castlemain over Charles Stewart was at an end. He grew calm and resolute, but with this calmness came a sensation almost of loathing for the woman who had forced him to outrage the memory of the dead—who had cajoled him into degrading his own children into her menials.

"My children—my poor children, was it thus you were received in a country where I was king?" cried Charles, with a burst of sudden anguish—"and now where can I seek for them? Even now they may be dead!"

"No, sire, no, they are safe and well. They left Hampton Court only to find shelter and friends with John Bruce and his wife. It was a humble refuge, but safe and honest!" said Eunice, eagerly coming forward. "In a few hours time they can be within the palace walls—only, sire, do not force the poor lady to wed the man her heart loathes—do not again urge her union with Sir John Payton."

"Sir John Payton," repeated Charles—"oh, yes, I remember, but he will hardly expect to match himself with my—with Francesca now."

"In all but that, I am sure the sweet lady will be obedient," said Eunice.

"She is in truth a lovely and gentle child—but is she aware—knows she ought of this?"

"Nothing, sire. Since this secret came into my possession I have mentioned it to no one, not even to John Bruce."

"But it is many months since—how came you alone to possess this knowledge? The casket could not have fallen into your hands at the time!"

"Sire," answered Eunice, with a firm but gentle manner, "if I have given you pleasure in this—if the knowledge contained in the casket is of value, I pray you in return let me remain silent! I cannot tell how the casket came into my hands, but it surely was taken from the arm of the dead lady as I have related."

"This is strange!" murmured Charles.

"Sire, grant me this privilege of silence; believe me I conceal nothing which would throw any new light upon the history of these young persons! Do not question me further!"

"Be it so," said the king: "surely we should not make harsh exactions on a day like this."

"And you are satisfied, sire?"

"Both satisfied and grateful!"

"Now, your highness, may I take leave? Only think, honest John Bruce has been waiting in the court all this time."

Charles drew one of the most valuable rings from his finger.

"Take this to the good man, it may reward his patience."

Eunice shook her head, and put back the ring with her hand.

"Nay, sire, John seeketh not ungodly ornaments," she said, with a demure look that, spite of his concern, brought a smile to the lips of King Charles. "He is a God fearing man, and it would not be well to arouse the spirit of mammon within him by the sight of kingly gauds. Besides John is naturally very patient, it costs him but little effort to wait."

"Then shall his reward be something more substantial," said Charles, replacing the ring on his finger.

"To-morrow he will escort Francesca and Guilo to the palace again, that will be reward enough for us!" answered Eunice, and with her face all radiant once more, the little dame went forth to join her husband.

Eunice was crossing the court hanging upon the sturdy arm of John Bruce. She was bright with the joy that follows a good action, and striving like an over gleeful child to subdue her pace to his long and measured footsteps, when they met Sir John Payton. The young baronet had just dismounted from his horse, and was walking over to that side of the palace occupied by the Countess of Castlemain, when he almost ran against the Puritan and his pretty wife. He stopped short with a look of the most profound surprise, and was about to express his astonishment at seeing them at Hampton Court, but Eunice anticipated him, and with a gravity of manner quite unusual to her, relinquished her husband's arm.

"John Bruce, will you walk forward and see that the boat is in readiness—while I crave the escort of Sir John to the river side. It is a quiet walk, Sir John, and we shall scarcely met courtiers enough on the way to make you blush for my country bearing."

John Bruce walked on, though it would seem by his tardy step, a little reluctant to relinquish the charm of his wife's society without a protest; and Sir John, still lost in surprise, turned mechanically and retraced his steps with Eunice at his side.

"In the name of all that is wonderful how came you here, Eunice, and with him?" was the first abrupt question.

"I come with him," answered Eunice, gravely, "because a husband is the natural and most proper companion of every honest wife. My business was with the king."

"With the king!"

"About an hour since I placed in his majesty's hand the casket with which you entrusted me on our last interview." This reply fell upon the startled ear of the baronet the more powerfully that it was uttered in a calm voice.

The baronet turned deathly pale.

"Eunice, Eunice Bruce, you have not done this!"

"Sir John, I have saved you from an act of villainy which would have made you very unhappy all the rest of your life. Some day you will thank me, but not yet—I do not expect it yet."

"Eunice Bruce, have you given that casket to the king?"

"Indeed, and in solemn truth I have."

"And with it the knowledge that will blast me forever in his eyes? You told him that Sir John Payton rifled the dead—concealed his prize like a thief, and and——" The unhappy man gasped for breath, an overwhelming sense of disgrace seemed crushing him to the earth. He could not finish the sentence.

"No, I told him nothing of this," answered Eunice, filled with generous compassion of his anguish: "that you ever saw the casket is known only to yourself and to me. Did I not say your honor was safe in my hands?"

"And you have not betrayed me to the king?"

"Did you think me capable of it, Sir John?"

"I did not—I could not anticipate anything that you have done, strange, lovely woman!" said Sir John, with a ghastly smile, but drawing a deep breath that bespoke the inward relief her assurance had given.

"Oh, Sir John, you will thank me—on your knees you ought to thank me for this day's act. It has saved you from memories that make honest men shrink—you were on the verge of a great crime. You were about to stain an honorable and ancient name—to break a pure heart with a union urged only by a thirst for gold and power. By your passions you would have carried shame to the hearth of an honest man, who never wronged you or yours. Sir John, I have saved you from this! Look up to Heaven and thank God that I am not the weak, wicked woman your importunities would have made me! Thank God that instead of sharing your designs I have saved you from their consequences!"

Eunice Bruce was something more than beautiful

then. In her angelic strength, in her honest truth, she became absolutely sublime. She stood still, her eyes beaming with sweet compassion, were bent upon his face; one little hand was extended toward him: her lips grew red and trembled with the energy of her words.

"Woman—woman, I never loved you till now," exclaimed Sir John Payton, trembling with the sublime admiration her beauty and her noble enthusiasm excited.

"And now—now your love would not harm me—it would bring no shame beneath that honest man's roof," said Eunice, extending her hand toward the heavy figure of her husband, who was moving slowly away in the distance. Tears rolled over the crimson of her cheeks like jewels flashing up from the waters of a heart never thoroughly stirred till then. Sir John scarcely knew her, so bright, so changed was the character of her beauty; he felt like one who had been playing with an infant, and all at once saw it unfurl the wings of an archangel. Eunice had told the truth, Sir John Payton would not have wronged her then.

She reached forth her hand, smiling through her tears.

"Sir John, farewell; let us part in kindness!"

He took her hand, his trembled like an aspen.

"In kindness, yes—I shall be a happier, a better man from the remembrance of this hour. Eunice Bruce, farewell!" He bent his head, touched his lips to the little hand so frankly surrendered to his grasp, and turned away.

CHAPTER XX.

HOUR after hour went by, and King Charles remained alone in his cabinet—alone with that casket of papers with the gifts that the dead seemed to have brought up to him from her watery grave, when at length he opened the door of his cabinet and looked out; the man in waiting was startled by the change in his countenance.

"Clarkson!" said the king, "does any one know if Lord Rochley is at his house in London?"

"He was but two days ago," was the reply.

"Let a courier be sent off at once; say that the king desires his presence without loss of time!"

"Yes, sire."

Charles drew back and closed the door again. Everything was quiet in the cabinet; no one entered, no one came forth. Any person to have looked into that room would have deemed the title of "merry monarch" a sad mockery then; the pale and working forehead bent over those discolored papers; the tears that rolled one after another down that dark cheek; the eyes surcharged with bitter, bitter grief. Was that the merry monarch of old England?

Hours and hours went by; then a single horseman rode into the palace court, and the old Earl of Rochley, with a quicker tread than usual, and some anxiety in his countenance, passed up to the king's cabinet.

Charles was still alone, sitting with his elbows planted on a table, and bearing evident traces of the anguish that had not yet ceased to wring his heart.

As the monarch lifted his face, the old earl poured in astonishment at its haggard expression, and when Charles spoke he was yet more startled by the huskiness of his voice.

Like most men who have led an existence of great anxiety and constant vacillation, Charles, though naturally more than brave, shrunk from the excitement of a scene which was to renew the agitations that had rendered his precarious life one of turbulent anxiety; but all his better nature had been fully aroused that day, and though he turned pale and shrunk from the first presence of Lord Rochley, these symptoms of wavering soon gave place to a firm and grave demeanor. He arose, and waving his hand to prevent all unnecessary ceremony, desired the old earl to be seated.

Lord Rochley sat down and waited in silence for the king to speak. He was too old a courtier for any expression of the astonishment he felt, and would not even testify the curiosity that was consuming him, by more than a casual glance at the monarch. His seat was near the table, and as he cast his eyes downward they fell upon a miniature which lay huddled among some papers at the king's elbow. Instantly his cool and studied composure gave way. He started from his seat, and reaching over the table drew the miniature toward him.

At first Charles lifted his hand as if to prevent the act, but, checking the coward impulse, he let the hand fall heavily on the table again, and bent his eyes upon the earl. He saw the sharp change that swept over the old man's countenance, and marked that the hand which held the miniature grew more and more unsteady, till the glittering chain attached to it quivered in every link. Keenly, and as one nerved to a painful task, Charles watched these signs of emotion, and when the old man lifted his eyes from the miniature, they met the fixed and steady gaze of the king.

"Sire,"

"Yes," said Charles, with a degree of unnatural firmness that betrayed how severe had been the struggle to attain power over himself, "it is the picture of your daughter Alice."

The earl laid down the miniature and half arose.

"Stay," said Charles; "tell me, I beseech you, the history of this poor lady. Since my return to England you have never mentioned her name in my presence."

"Because," answered Lord Rochley, with a white and quivering lip—"because it was a disgraced and forbidden thing this wretched girl's name. Because no man has dared to mention the name of an only child, for many a long year before the father she abandoned and disgraced."

"The story has never in its details reached me," said Charles, in a low and husky voice.

"And yet, sire, it was after your last sad defeat in England that she disappeared. You remember spending some weeks at my castle, with several gay nobles that followed you from the Continent before that disastrous conflict commenced."

"I remember!" said the king.

"After the battle of Worcester, when your majesty had escaped over sea, my daughter become greatly

changed: from a bright and joyous maiden, proud in her high birth and matchless beauty, she began to droop as if some hidden sorrow lay at her heart. I was busy among the royal adherents, and forgot to mark these changes as others did. I only saw that she was sad, and that her beauty had lost its freshness. We were all too deeply anxious regarding the safety of your highness for much thought of domestic concerns. A short time after the news of your safe arrival on the Continent reached us, Alice disappeared. One of the young nobles who had followed your fortunes, I afterward learned had been concealed in our neighborhood—I traced him to the coast. There I learned that my daughter had too surely been his companion. She was gone, leaving behind her bitterness and disgrace. She was no longer my child—from that day her name has never been mentioned in the dwelling she deserted."

"And you know nothing of her destiny since?" asked the king.

"Nothing. The man whom she fled with died a few months after; I had no wish to learn more."

"And yet," said Charles, with a terrible effort at self-control; "more you must know. My Lord of Rochley, this moment I would lay down half my kingdom to feel that I, your king, had never wronged you. It was for me, Charles Stewart, the Lady Alice left her home—my lord, put back your sword, its point could not sting my heart half so keenly as the remorse aroused by the memory of my own deed. I will not mock you by pleading youth, or any of those paltry excuses that have hitherto veiled the atrocity of the deed to my own conscience. I will not say in extenuation that I loved your daughter—though Heaven knows how truly this might be urged. Lord Rochley, Lady Alice is dead—she perished—she was shipwrecked on the coast of Cornwall more than a year since."

The earl did not speak, though his lips parted as if to make the effort. Slowly thrusting back his sword that he had half drawn from its sheath, he sunk to his chair. The truth, the painful, bitter truth was breaking upon him.

"And I—I saw her dragged up from the water—I did not know her. Great Heavens, how she must have suffered before she could have changed so much."

"She did suffer: even you would have pitied her."

"Doubtless—doubtless she was not one to bustle through life with the profligates that composed your court abroad without feeling the degradation."

"She never saw them—not one of those who clung to my fortunes abroad ever dreamed of her residence in the quiet spot where she chose to bury her grief."

"Then she had some pride left—she did not degrade herself into an open follower of the court!"

"She lived alone, under a changed name, and even I, who had wronged her, never saw her face. She fled from disgrace—from the terrible fear of a parent's wrath that awaited the exposure of her shame in England, not to the arms of her unworthy lover. In Italy she lived alone, receiving only from the resources of a beggared king, enough to keep herself and her children from absolute want. She refused to leave

her solitude, even when the crown of England was mine in undisputed possession. I tell you, sir earl, I would have wedded her in the face of all England, but she refused my messages to that effect. The glitter of a crown she persisted would but serve to light up her shame—she asked but to die as she had lived alone with her children. At last she consented to visit England long enough to place her children under my protection before she died—for her health was failing, and she seemed to have a dark presentiment of the death that awaited her—not death in that form—she could not have anticipated anything so dreadful. Her visit was to have been secret and brief—it was secret! It was brief, my lord, you saw the end of it.”

“Yes,” answered Lord Rochley, with all the bitterness of self-reproach environing his voice, “I brought these poor children here, the children of my own lost daughter—and for what?”

Charles did not understand him: he knew nothing of the hidden hopes of court aggrandizement—the wily designs—built upon his own character—with which the old courtier had introduced Francesca into his palace. But the earl knew them, and his very soul sickened within him. How could he condemn the man who had brought ruin into his own family, when he had been so ready to provide new victims only that his own court interest might be served. All at once a sudden and sharp dread came upon him—had these designs indeed proved futile? Francesca, his grand-daughter, where was she? had she escaped the snares his own hands had woven around her? Stung with the agony of these bitter thoughts, the old man started up.

“Sire, these children—these poor, ill-used children—tell me, in mercy tell me, that no evil has chanced to them beneath this roof!”

“They are safe—they are well, my lord. Thank Heaven, toward them no irreparable wrong has been done.”

“Thank God!” burst from the lips of that grey-headed old courtier, and, sinking back in his chair, he laughed a low, hysterical laugh, that told more painfully than tears could have done the terrible nature of his apprehensions.

To King Charles this singular excitement seemed but the result of his own confession. He drew close to the old man, and taking a folded paper from those that had filled the casket, laid it reverently before him.

“This,” he said, “is addressed to you: she had evidently written it to leave behind on her departure from England; read, my lord, and for her sake pardon your king for his unkingly wrong, and give to these poor twins the love Alice dared not ask for herself.”

Lord Rochley took the letter. His hand trembled, and a tear stood in that proud, hard eye.

“Not here, I cannot read it here,” he said, rising feebly to his feet.

“My lord, go not forth till all that a king—nay, a man has power to do, is offered in atonement for the evil I have brought upon your house,” said the king, and Charles Stewart bent his knee before the man he had wronged.

“Sire,” said the old man, touched and subdued by this act of humiliation. “In this thing I am not without blame: let us make atonement for the past by acts of kindness to these unhappy children. Let us unite in protecting them from the stigma which rests upon their birth.”

It was strange to see how a common sense of wrong had equalized these two men. Charles could no more assume the form and ceremonials of his station before the man he had injured, than the earl could sustain the stern and sublime resentment for the injury which a sense of inward integrity could have given. Each was subdued by a consciousness of evil acts and evil intentions; and they parted, if not in forgiveness, at least humbled with a sense that neither was strong enough in his own integrity to extend forgiveness to the other. If the station and power of King Charles had any share in subduing the earl’s resentment, the old man was unconscious of it—but education is powerful, and long before Lord Rochley entered his own residence he was building castles in the air, all founded on the close connection which his grandchildren held with the royalty of England.

CHAPTER XXI.

A SINGULAR group was assembled in the oratory, which we have once described as the favorite retreat of Queen Catharine. The apartment held almost sacred from any presence but that of the royal devotee, was now brilliant with lights, and alive with the sweet hum of happy voices. Some ten or twelve persons were present, all arrayed as if for a festival, and in that half nervous, half happy tremor of expectation which is sure to attend the approach of any momentous event.

Queen Catharine, happy in the presence of her husband, and arrayed in all that splendor which gave brilliancy to the sparkling blackness of her eyes, and depth to a smile more joyous than had brightened her lip for many a day, was leaning back in her chair, and addressing question after question in a sweet, half whisper to a young girl who bent over her, glad to hide the warm blushes that came and went upon her cheek by a semblance of deep attention. A little on her right stood King Charles, talking in a low voice to our pretty acquaintance, Eunice Bruce, who leaned with the graceful bend of a flower upon the arm of her husband. She answered pleasantly to the king, now and then quite unconscious of the breach of etiquette, speaking a word to honest John in order to keep him in countenance. But he, poor fellow, completely bewildered by all the courtly splendor, only parted his lips in reply without the courage to utter a word.

A little further off stood a group of females, all sparkling with smiles, and radiant with a starlight of jewels, evidently in a flutter of excitement, and yet puzzled to know why they were assembled in that unusual place.

These were the favorite ladies of Queen Catharine, and she seemed to remark the suspense with no little enjoyment. Here also was the Earl of Rochley, and by his side the boy Guilo, who kept his large eyes bent

upon the face of his sister with an unquiet glance, as if he did not quite comprehend the change that had come over her.

At length a page entered and whispered a word to the king, who spoke in a low tone to Queen Catharine, and, smiling on Francesca, went out.

Crossing several rooms that lay between the queen's oratory and his own private apartments, Charles entered his cabinet, where he found Lord Bowdon, waiting. Marks of haste and strong excitement were visible in the young earl's look and manner as he met the king.

"So our messenger found you, my lord," said Charles, with a degree of sparkling cheerfulness that contrasted painfully with the constraint evidently endured by the earl. "Our letter, we trust, brought nothing but the most pleasing intelligence?"

"It informed me," answered Lord Bowdon, "that the lady to whom I am betrothed has at length reached England; that this evening I am to meet her."

"My lord, you are a happy man. It is seldom that we who find our hands linked by others, are rewarded by our submission by so much beauty as awaits you."

Lord Bowdon answered only by a constrained smile.

"I never have, and never shall dispute the wisdom of my noble father, in thus, upon his death-bed, fixing the destiny of his son. But, sire, is it your pleasure that I be presented to the lady this evening?"

"Presented!" exclaimed the king, with a light laugh. "Why, everything is prepared for the marriage."

"My marriage, sire? This is sudden—it is impossible!" cried Bowdon, recoiling in utter astonishment. "I have not seen the lady; even her name, her family are unknown to me."

"Both were such as secured the approval of your father, my lord."

"I know, I know, but he did not intend this. Sire, I cannot be forced even by your highness into this abrupt union—I must have time."

"Time!" answered Charles, still preserving his gaiety. "Why, before another week is gone her majesty has settled that ourselves and half the court shall hold a carouse over this marriage in your old castle of Bowdon. So there is no time to be lost."

Lord Bowdon had learned from Eunice the single fact that Francesca had taken refuge with her, and he knew that Bethna would shelter the helpless girl. Bethna was in the neighborhood of his own castle—he recoiled at the thought of taking a bride there; the revels, the heartless rejoicings could not fail to reach the humble retreat of that noble, helpless girl.

"Sire, sire, any thing but that! I cannot take this strange lady to Bowdon," he cried, unmindful that he thus declined, almost rudely, the honor of a royal visit.

"Odsfish, my lord, but you seem willing to do anything save that which we most desire and have a right to expect. But we can fling away no more time in argument upon a stubborn man. Wait here awhile."

Charles went out as he spoke, leaving Lord Bowdon

alone and painfully agitated. He was surprised to find how much of hope had, till that moment, lingered in his heart. Now that he was called upon suddenly to seal the fate prepared for him on the death-bed of his father, every high and strong feeling of his nature rose up in rebellion against what he knew to be a terrible sacrifice, yet which he felt bound to perform by obligations the most binding and sacred. Still he had not the courage to consummate his own misery, thus without an hour of preparation. He wanted yet more time to cast the image of Francesca from his soul. He would kneel to the king—he would confess his love more fully for this gentle girl. Surely, surely, Charles could not force on these hated nuptials after that. He should at least gain time. Filled with these thoughts, Lord Bowdon became eager for the king's return. His face grew pale with intense excitement—his eyes were bent upon the door, and he drew nearer to it, as if that would hasten the monarch's approach.

A faint, a very faint noise struck his ear from the outside. It was the rustle of silk, blended with a quick, panting sound, as if some one had paused on the threshold to take breath. Lord Bowdon's cheek flushed and his heart beat audibly. A wild, magnetic thrill, indescribably sweet, ran through his frame. The door swung gently upon its hinges, and, for the first time since they parted in Cornwall, Lord Bowdon and Francesca stood face to face.

Trembling and pale, but not with grief, the young girl stood before her benefactor, beautiful, more beautiful than even his vivid memory had painted her. She appeared before him—the robes of snowy silk, studded with pearls and damasked with buds of silver, the pearls gleaming in the raven blackness of her hair, and rising with the white swell of her symmetrical throat. Why was she, the wandering minstrel girl, in those queenly and bridal robes? Why was she there alone with him, and in the king's palace? He asked none of these questions—the thrilling consciousness of her beloved presence was all that he felt.

"Francesca, beloved Francesca!" burst from his lips—few and passionate were the words, but with them went forth the wealth of a noble heart. Enough, they told that trembling girl how truly she was loved. They brought the blood, warm and bright, into that delicate cheek. Francesca held out her hands.

"My lord, the king sent me hither, and bade me ask if—if—but I cannot say it"—and, covered with burning blushes, the young girl bowed her head in a shower of blissful shame.

"Francesca, Francesca, speak to me. Tell me again, did the king send you hither?"

"Else had I not dared to come, but I could not disobey him. Lord Bowdon, he is my father!"

"Francesca!"

"My benefactor!" Never had Francesca's broken English sounded so sweet as then. Never had Lord Bowdon's ear drank in her words so greedily. It seemed like a dream—a vision of delirious happiness. Even after he had listened to the whole, the reality appeared so wild he could not quite believe it. But Francesca was by his side—her hand, he

never knew how it came there, lay trembling in his. With her every movement the gleam and rustle of her bridal garments sent a fresh glow to his heart.

Again the door opened and Guilo entered the cabinet in search of his sister. A low cry of delight broke from the beautiful mute as his eyes fell on Lord Bowdon. Again and again he kissed the hand extended toward him, and smiled when he saw that the delicate fingers of his sister were clasped by that hand again the moment his own lips were removed. Guilo had obtained generosity and strength from affection. He no longer shrunk from the contemplation of love so true and noble, as that which existed between Francesca and Lord Bowdon.

The court of King Charles had glorious subjects for gossip during the next week. The marriage of Lord Bowdon and Francesca in the oratory of the queen—the quiet and graceful carelessness with which Charles, without any formal announcement, acknowledged the bride to be his daughter, and her brother his son, as if it had been the most proper and natural thing in the world—the issuing of letters patent by which Guilo was made the heir of his grandfather, the old Earl of Rochley—all these things were splendid subjects for court gossip. But to this was added the abrupt dismissal of Lady Castlemain

from the station in the royal household, and the disappearance of Sir John Payton, who, amid all this tumult of singular events, took a fancy to visit Paris, much to the astonishment of every one who thought about his movements. And thus for a matter of three weeks Hampton Court was kept in a state of brilliant excitement.

The merry monarch never held his threatened carouse at Bowdon Castle, but he sometimes visited his daughter at the old mansion with a few of his gravest counsellors. At such times he would steal away unattended to wander upon the shore. Those who remarked this observed that the monarch's rambles always terminated at an old oak tree not far removed from the water. A stone cross, ancient and moss-grown, marked the spot, and its shadow waving slanted over a hillock covered with rich turf, and in the blossom season flushed with violets. Those who knew that this hillock was a grave, never wondered to see the king look sad and troubled on his return from these walks; but to the courtiers that accompanied King Charles on these quiet visits to his daughter, it was only a pretty mound on which the wild flowers grew thriftily, and they marveled that anything so simple could cloud for a moment the gay spirits of "England's merry monarch."

THE SHEPHERDESS.

A STORY OF THE SCOTTISH GLENS.

BY MARY V. SPENCER.

"The moon was a-waning,
The tempest was over."—ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

I.—LASSIE HERDING SHEEP.

BEAUTIFUL as the heather bell of her own glorious land was Helen Græmo. She was the only child of her parents, and dwelt all alone with them in a Highland glen, sharing her solitude with the wild waterfall and the eagle that floated a speck in the sky overhead. Sweetly as a dream of early infancy—gently as some silver flowing stream her placid existence had glided by! If you could have heard her warbling some simple ballad out of sight, you would scarcely have thought it a human voice, but have looked to see what lark high up filled Heaven with music. Her light step, as she tripped over the hills, was like that of some aerial being, and, in the distance, you half expected to see it float into the air. Worshipped she was by all, but especially by young Roland Glenco, the blitheest, boldest and handsomest lad in Scotland's thousand glens! Often, after she had passed, he knelt to kiss the heather she had trod upon. Oftener still he wished he was a prince, that he might lay his riches and rank at her feet. But as he wished, he sighed, for alas! he was an orphan, depending on his daily labor for his daily bread, while the father of Helen was the owner of a Highland hill, and a rich man for a peasant. So, poor Roland, fearing to press his suit, sighed, and was silent.

But when was lassie loved, and ignorant of it? Helen saw the downcast eyes, the embarrassed air, and blushing cheek of the young shepherd; and knew, by these tokens, that his heart was hers. Her own bosom throbbed when a suspicion of this first darted across her mind, and the crimson tide that suffused her cheek, spread over neck and shoulder, until even her snowy bosom flushed as rosily as Mount Blanc at sunset. She had never thought of such a thing before, but now she knew that she loved Roland. Insensibly her affection for the young shepherd had grown up in her breast. They had walked together by the braes, they had watched their flocks on neighboring hills, and in the long winter evenings he had sat at her father's ingle-side talking with her parents and herself; and whenever they met he had always a smile, or sometimes a wild flower for her; and so it happened—have not such things happened before?—that his image became entwined with all her associations, and being ever present to her: thoughts, led her on unawares to love. And yet, when she discovered the existence of this affection, though she trembled and blushed, all alone as she was, she did not weep;

but on the contrary a thrill of delight went through her heart, and visions of a happy, holy wedded life rose before her pure imagination. In the innocence of her sweet soul she thought nothing of the difference between her father's wealth and that of Roland. Yet she saw, when her lover looked but dared not speak his love, that something held back the words that trembled on his lips, and she wondered—dear lassie!—what it could be.

It was on a bland, Highland morning, many a long year ago—for this little legend is told in the glens as happening in far distant times—that Helen, as she watched her father's sheep, leaned against the hill-side and twirled her distaff busily; for, in those days, no peasant girl, or indeed no lady even of high degree, kept her fair fingers idle, but was ever occupied, either in spinning whitest linen for the cottage loom, or in embroidering some knightly surcoat or bit of silken tapestry; and so Helen, working and singing, was thinking of one manly form alone, when suddenly a step startled her ear, and Roland himself stood before her. She looked up with a faint cry. He was attired as for a journey. There was something, too, so sad, so earnest in his face that the color left the cheek of Helen, and she dropped her eyes.

"Helen!" said Roland, and hesitating an instant, he took her hand—he had never done this before, and Helen's agitation increased—"Helen, I am going away—"

He stopped here, as if the words choked him. One quick look of wondering inquiry, sudden as the lightning flash, Helen gave him; and then again her eyes sought the ground, and she colored to the tips of her delicate fingers.

"Perhaps I shall not soon return—perhaps never," he continued, speaking very fast, and in much emotion, "the old man who brought me here, an orphan, when a child, has sent for me to the Lowlands, and I go to obey his behest, for he is the only father I have ever known. I feel like one going to the scaffold, too, Helen—every step I take from the glens is like a dagger thrust through my heart. But, as the old man says, I am but a poor shepherd lad here, and down in the Lowlands I may become a soldier and advance my fortunes. But for that thought, Helen, I would not go. But Helen, dear Helen—for now I can make bold to lay open before you the heart of an honest lad—I have dared to love you, humble as I am, and rich as you are; and I sometimes think—forgive me if it is

a folly—that if I had gear as great as your own, your father might not spurn my suit, and that, perhaps, you yourself would not despise it. Nay, Helen, do not be angry—do not turn away your head in indignation—it was a vain dream, and I do not know what madness urged me on to speak thus to you. Overlook my rash words, and bid me a good bye; and I will try to forget you, though that I can never, I fear.”

So humbly did he speak, and so heart-broken—with a tone that would have cut you to have heard—that, as he let drop the fair hand he held in his own, Helen suddenly turned her face and for one moment, one moment only, looked at him. There was no anger, but tears in those sweet eyes; and a glance shot from them, so tender, reproachful and confiding—oh! you should have been there to have seen, for no language of ours can describe it.

“Do not go, Roland,” she said, “I am sure father——”

She stopped, all in confusion, and again hid her head from his sight; but this time it was on his shoulder: and Roland, wild with rapture, clasped her to his heart. That look had told all, even without her words. He was beloved: and every nerve in his frame thrilled at the thought!

At first everything was forgotten but Helen's sweet confession. But then came the recollection of her parents, who, though esteeming him, would certainly object to bestowing their daughter on a penniless shepherd lad. Soon, too, followed other thoughts. The message he had received from his foster father was a peremptory one, to come to the Lowlands, and take up the trade of a soldier. Could he have heard of Roland's love, and knowing its folly, sought this cure? Whatever might be the reasons for the exercise of his authority, Roland acknowledged its force; and so, with a sad heart, he prepared to tell Helen that he must prosecute his journey. She wept, but was at last convinced. He pictured to her imagination hopes he scarcely dared entertain, to reconcile her to the separation, promising to return soon, perhaps before the Summer was over. “I may win gold—who knows?—or my foster father may give me some gear to begin with. Oh! Helen, believe me, I will prove faithful, and Heaven will yet bless our love, and unite us happily.”

And so the sweet lassie dried her tears, and smiling on her lover, accompanied him part of the way on his journey: then, standing on the brow of the hill, and shading her eyes with her hand, gazed upon him until he was lost to sight. Alas! when hearts thus part, how little do they know when they shall meet again!

II.—THE OLD KEEP.

It was a hot Summer day, a month after Roland and Helen parted, when a hale old man and a blithe shepherd lad, approached one of those old castellated towers that still frown occasionally over the landscapes of Cumberland, but were then far more frequent than now.

Roland, for the youth was our hero, had met his foster father at Stirling, according to the message; but, instead of being at once informed of the old

man's purpose, had been told he must prepare for a longer journey; and accordingly the two had set out together, and travelling by easy stages, for they walked all the way, had at last arrived at the old keep.

Roland's companion sighed as he paused and looked up at that grey tower; but speedily his eye kindled, and seeming to get rid of his momentary melancholy, he called gaily to our hero to follow him, as he entered the open door and began to ascend the somewhat ruined steps, for the place was uninhabited. Roland followed in silence, wondering at this strange demeanor. When they arrived at the top, which commanded a wide view, the old man seized his companion's arm and said—

“I am now going to tell you a strange tale: and have waited until I had brought you here to tell it. Do you see yonder blue hills far away to the North, which we crossed two days ago—and here to the South that swell of upland, twenty miles distant as the bird flies—and off to the West that thread of silver on the landscape, which looks like a brook, but is a river—and to the East the dark wooded elevation, half a day's journey hence:—well then, my boy,” he exclaimed, as Roland nodded assent to all his questions, “all within those boundaries are yours—for all these are the ancient lands of the Cliffords—and now, since bloody Gloster is no more, and Harry of Lancaster rules the realm, the son of the Clifford shall have his own again.”

The old man had spoke with rapidly increasing enthusiasm, and now he fairly clasped the youth in his arms, and wept aloud for joy.

“But how—where—what do you mean?” exclaimed Roland, bewildered; for all this appeared to him like some strange dream.

“What do I mean,” said his companion, holding him at arm's length, and gazing proudly at his features. “Why this, that I see before me the only child of the murdered Clifford, and the lineal heir of that ancient and noble line.”

“Explain—how can this be?—you fool me, old man,” said Roland, placing his hand on his forehead, yet leaning for weakness against the battlement, for, in the wild hope that this tale might be true, he trembled like a girl.

“I am, or was once a knight in your father's train,” said the old man, “and when the rose of York triumphed over that of Lancaster, and the race of Cliffords was hunted down like wild beasts, took you, the only child of my master, and fled with you to the Scottish Highlands, where I had you brought up as a shepherd by a cousin of one of my menelmen; while I myself took service in the Scottish ranks, that I might be near to watch over you, and bring you to your own again, if ever Lancaster should triumph over York. That happy day has come, and now I see a Clifford once more on Clifford soil!”

It seemed like a dream to Roland, and it was long before he could feel that all this was not visionary—that he was indeed the possessor of these broad lands—that he was a noble, and of England's proudest chivalry. But the old knight had proof for every thing he asserted. He produced, from a bundle he had carried all the way, the identical clothes in which

Roland, as a babe, had been dressed, on the night of the flight to Scotland, together with the costly trinkets, marked with the Clifford arms, that the child had worn. He carried him down to the neighboring village, where still lived the foster mother who had nursed him, and who recognized her boy immediately, telling him of marks on his person, of which Roland had believed no one but himself knew. There were aged retainers, too, who testified that his features, and his air was that of the undoubted Clifford line; and so Roland was fain to believe all this was true; and with what rapture did he admit it, when he thought of Helen!

"She will be mine now," was his first reflection, "nothing can separate us. I will make her my countess, and there will be none to rival her in the land. Oh! how she will be surprised when she hears of it."

Roland, full of these thoughts, would have hurried back to Scotland to claim his bride; but this, on second thoughts, he could not do; for it was necessary first to travel up to London, with the old knight, and exhibiting his proofs, claim from Henry VII., then fresh from the victory of Bosworth field, the heritage of the Cliffords. This occupied time, and there was, at first, some delay. But the evidence was too strong to be long resisted, and so, finally, Roland was placed in possession of the rich domains of his ancestors. But his romantic story had got abroad in London—and reader there was as much curiosity and enthusiasm then as now—so, at the monarch's express command, the young Lord Clifford was forced to abide in London for awhile, to grace the royal court. Efforts were made, by more than one fair lady, to win this hero for a husband.

III.—THE ORPHAN.

AWAY!—away to the glens again, and to sweet Helen Greeme.

Months had elapsed since the departure of her lover, when, one evening in winter, Helen sat by the bed-side of her mother. She and her parent were now the only inhabitants in that Highland home. Roland had been gone scarcely a month, when her father sickened and died. Helen saw his venerable form borne to its last resting-place, and then returned to their cot with her mother to weep, in sacred privacy, over the loss which they had never fully felt until this moment. Oh! how, at this sad crisis, her thoughts at times went abroad, far from those Scottish hills, down to the then almost unknown Lowlands, wondering where Roland could be and wishing for his presence to soothe her sorrow. Her mother, prostrated by the blow, at first appeared about to yield her own life also; but days passed, and then weeks, and finally her health rallied, until all danger was considered past. Up to this period there had been one or more female relatives constantly with the Greemes, but these now took their leave, and Helen and her parent were left alone. One or more of the neighbors, however, from the surrounding glens, visited them daily; for all around, for miles, the sympathy with the stricken family was deep and fervent.

But one wintry day, when a snow storm had been

threatening even from early morning, when there were no guests at the cottage; and Helen, when she saw the flakes begin to fall at noon, gave up the expectation of seeing any one that day. She sat down, all alone, for her mother was asleep in the inner room, and thought of the absent Roland, until the tears rose to her eyes, and she felt, oh! how desolate. For Helen began to fear that either he had forgotten her, or lost his life. He had solemnly promised her to return before winter, and now more than half of that inclement season had past. Never had she felt more lonely. Not even the hired shepherd was at the cabin, for he had gone down in the morning to shelter the sheep; and had not returned. She looked at the dark wintry sky, and at the flakes, which now began to fall fast; and a sensation of abandonment, amounting almost to despair took possession of her.

Suddenly she heard her mother calling her faintly from the other room; and hastening in, she forgot all other thoughts, in anxiety at the fatal change visible on her parent's face.

"Mother—dear mother," she said, "what is the matter with you? Do not look so strangely at me. Can it be the glare of the snow storm that I see on your countenance, or——" and she paused, blanched with terror; for she could not utter the word that came into her heart, freezing its pulses almost still.

"Or can it be death?" answered her parent, "that is what you would say, dearie. Yes! it is death, Helen. Nay! do not weep. Mine has been a long journey, and I am weary of this world. I shall lie, once more, side by side with my gudeman. Sixty and two years we have sat by the same ingle; and to be separated, even for this little while, is a pang. I should go, with rejoicings, but that I leave you alone, you who are the last and only surviving one of all our heirs. But God will protect the fatherless."

Her mother paused exhausted. Helen wept so that she could not speak. Soon the dying parent began again.

"Nay!—cheer thee, my darling," she said, extending her withered hand to draw Helen to her. "Roland will return and make this a happy home for thee. Believe the words of one about to die—he is still living—I feel it with a sort of prophetic insight. Bless thee, my child!"

She could utter no more, but sank back speechless. They were the last words which she ever breathed. Helen, with a shriek, clasped her fainting mother in her arms; then speedily bethought her of restoratives, and strove to reanimate the cold frame. At first there were no gleams of returning life, but finally the assiduity of our heroine prevailed: the mother opened her eyes, smiled on her child, and feebly pressed the hand of Helen. But she could not speak.

Hour after hour elapsed, and darkness began to gather in the room. Still Helen watched her mother, never once taking her eyes from that pale face. Long after breath had apparently ceased, Helen continued to lean over the still living form. But at last a shadow passed over the countenance, as when a stormy night suddenly shuts in on the moor. Then Helen, with a wail, fell senseless on the body.

When she recovered, all was dark, and the fire had

gone! She staggered to the door to throw it open—but it resisted her efforts. Only, as she shook it, some snow fell through the crevice from the top; and then the fearful truth flashed across her. The hut was buried in an avalanche. The living was entombed with the dead.

IV.—THE SNOW-STORM.

A WAX glare all around! Two hours there were yet before sunset; but it already was as dark as twilight. The air was full of snow-flakes. The clouds swept wildly overhead, stooping low and dark as they whirled onward; the wind shrieked in the ravines and down the hill-side; while the tall cliffs jutted up like islands, from that white ocean that buried every thing, far and near, in its insatiate depths. Cabin and mountain path, and every landmark of whatever character, had disappeared; while faster, faster, faster came down the pitiless snow!

Up that long mountain, in the midst of that fearful tempest, a little cavalcade had toiled all through the wintry afternoon. At first the way had been beset with only ordinary difficulties, and the adventurers had marched boldly forward; but finally it grew so tempestuous as to be safe for neither beast nor man. Then the greater portion of the company took shelter in a rude Highland cabin; but he who appeared to be their leader insisted on proceeding. He was richly dressed, and seemed of high degree; but his servitors shrank from following him further, and finally, by a large bribe, he persuaded the host, himself a shepherd, to accompany him.

Up the weary mountain-side they toiled; and just as twilight set in, reached the foot of the glen whither they were bound.

"Can you see the place?" asked our hero, for the stranger was he. "To think of their being all alone, on such a wild night as this."

"I cannot see it," said the man, after a long survey. "We have lost our way."

"Surely that cannot be," said Clifford. "Here are the outlines of the old hills that overlook the cottage, I am sure."

"I do not know," replied the man. "In this gloom, and amid the whirling flakes, we might easily confound one glen with another. But you can look for yourself."

Our hero gazed around for some minutes without speaking. Then he shook his head despondingly.

"I can see nothing of the place," he said.

"We shall die of cold, if we stay here," said the shepherd.

"They are not here!" said Clifford.

There was no other word uttered, but, as if by one impulse, the two turned to retrace their steps. They went down the glen, seeking for their late footsteps to guide their return; but the marks were already obliterated.

Suddenly a long, low, melancholy cry, like the wail of some spirit swept by. The two men started, paused, and looked at each other in inquiry. After a moment that peculiar sound rose and died again upon the ear.

"It is the voice of a wraith," cried the shepherd, in terror. "We shall never reach our homes alive!"

"It is the howl of a dog," said our hero, "some one is in distress; and God has sent that wail to warn us, we can be of assistance. Hark! there it is again! It comes from up the glen. Follow me, and we shall soon know what it means!"

And the shepherd, now reassured, and with all his sympathies excited—for they who live in peril feel most speedily for the dangers of others—followed our hero, and, in a few minutes, stood with him in front of the cottage of Helen, or rather of what had once been the cottage; for now only a huge snow bank was visible. Yet, from the recesses of the fallen avalanche, rose the stifled howl of a watch-dog, like the mournful note of some waiting for the dead!

"There is some one buried here—it is the cottage of Helen—in God's name assist me to free them!" cried our hero.

How they labored, those two; for the almost frantic Clifford infused a portion of his own spirit into his companion! They might have labored in vain too, for they had no shovels with which to work, if Clifford had not remembered that, in the close, hard by, such utensils were kept, and recovered them from the snow, which drifting had left them nearly bare. But it was full three hours before they began to approach the roof. The storm had ceased, and the moon struggled through the clouds, when, at last, breaking a hole through the turf, Clifford saw, by the faint light of that luminary, the inanimate form of Helen's mother, lying on the bed beneath him, and Helen herself, seemingly as lifeless, stretched across it.

He leaped down, he seized that form in his arms, he chafed the cold hand, he called her by a thousand endearing epithets. Still cold, cold and motionless. He pressed her to his bosom wildly, and implored Heaven for mercy—only to restore her to him for a little while, a short year. Still as inanimate and frozen as ice. Then, with a cry of heart-breaking agony, he dropped senseless across the bed, with Helen still clasped to his heart.

When Clifford recovered his consciousness, Helen was bending over him, and the room was full of his followers and others. The storm having abated, succor had been sent. I arrived in time to resuscitate Helen, and subsequently our hero. All was now joy, where had been sorrow. Yet not all, for the mother of Helen lay dead before them.

What more have we to tell? Do not the annals of that day narrate the rest of the story? How that Lord Clifford married "a lady of low degree," but who withal was the sweetest and loveliest woman of the whole court—how she died in a few years, leaving himself childless and disconsolate—and how, in memory of that happy wedded life, he refused a second alliance, and retiring to the old keep in Cumberland, which he had fitted up, spent his days in contemplation and study.

Parts of this legend are preserved even to this day in Cumberland, where the peasants point out the tower where the "warlock Clifford" studied; for, in those times, all men of science were considered necromancers.

And so ends our legend!

THE FAIR PILGRIM

BY MISS M. J. WINDLE.

It was a sweet moonlight night in October. The soft rays fell in a flood upon a fair hamlet in Old England. All around bespoke the serenity of nature at peace. Not a voice of living thing—not a whisper of leaf or waving bough—not a breath of wind disturbed the stillness. Beds of violets perfumed the air: for almost every dwelling had a garden before it—some very small, but nearly all gay: and the sweet-brier, honey-suckle, and other climbers hung their clusters over the gable ends, or crept between the latticed windows—now peeping in, now hanging down their heads like timid children in their play. It was a pretty and secluded spot. And in the distance might be seen the simple church, its delicate spire mixing itself with Heaven, at once a monument of the faith to which it was devoted, and a landmark to point to the final destination of its worshippers.

In the centre of the village stood a cottage, about the appearance of which was something that indicated in its inhabitants a certain superiority to their neighbors. The jasmine and the woodbine clustered there more luxuriantly, and were trained in better taste; the garden was more flourishing, the hedge-rows more accurately trimmed, the gate more newly whitewashed.

The moonlight slept in quiet shadow over the green turf in front, and through one of the lower windows might have been seen a group of self-devoted and pious men; who had at length met, at this solemn season of midnight, to make their final arrangements in regard to an enterprise in which their most ardent hopes and anticipations had long been enlisted, and which was now, after repeated delays, on the eve of successful fulfilment.

At the moment our story opens, they had assumed the posture of supplication: and the owner of the little cottage, in a trembling and impassioned voice, poured forth a prayer that God would smile upon and bless an undertaking so full of peril. And as the still and shadowy light which filled that lowly room as with the presence of a spirit fell upon the upturned face of the speaker, it gave to his features an additional and not wholly earth-born solemnity of expression, contrasting strongly with the less ethereal and sun-burnt countenances of those around him.

The prayer ended, and, after a lengthened conference, a young girl entered the room. There was something more interesting than beauty in the smooth, fair brow of Bessie Gray, over which the dark hair was plainly braided: while the neatness and simplicity of her attire added a peculiar character to her appearance. She approached the table with a modest grace, and received from her father a letter, with strict injunctions to deliver it on the following day, and await a reply.

It was a still, sweet morning when Bessie Gray found herself approaching the park which led to the castle of the Earl of D——. There was that delicious mildness in the air which renders some days in Autumn so inexpressibly delightful. The flower and the vine, not yet killed by early frost, put forth their few remaining buds: the birds, not yet flown to warmer climes, poured out their most melodious notes, as though, like a well-skilled belle, they had reserved their richest and fullest strains for a final song.

The broad, smoothly gravelled and well-kept road wound through a noble park, thoroughly stocked with deer. The castle seen in the distance was a beautiful relic of the architecture of the middle ages—a taste which we have lived to see revived. The extent of the building was sufficient to render it imposing in effect, while the style of it was calculated to unite comfort with the greatest magnificence.

As Bessie Gray looked upon that splendid pile, and the broad lauds that pertained to it, she sighed at the thought that the gentle child of its noble owner had much to leave if she should indeed determine to join in the enterprise of their humble band; and she feared for the success of her mission. Still her beating heart by an internal prayer, she ascended the steps and reached the large hall-door. The footman who answered her ring seemed determined to dispute her entrance—telling her that the Lady Alice could receive no one at that time. But her modest and gentle perseverance at length overcame his reluctance; and he led the way through a corridor, into a large and lofty library, fitted up with almost regal splendor.

At the extremity of this library was an immense folding-door. This had been left partly open, so that a view of the apartment beyond met the eye of the humble visitor, while she herself remained unobserved. It presented a perfect picture of ease and elegance united: a manner of life unnoticed by those accustomed to it, but which produces so much effect upon the senses of such as are habituated to scenes more simple. The massive, curved and gilded furniture, the rich damasks and velvets were in perfect unison with the idea of grandeur inspired by the vastness of the building.

Upon a low ottoman at the further end of the room sat the two young ladies of the castle: embroidering tapestry, which was at that time thought a fit occupation for females of rank. They were both beautiful—eminently so: but the Lady Alice was taller and fairer than her sister. Yet so delicate was the order of her beauty, so pure and soft her complexion, that her appearance almost gave token of fragile health. Her eyes, of a deep blue, wore a thoughtful and serene

expression, and her forehead, higher and broader than is usual in woman, gave indication of a certain nobleness of intellect, and added dignity to the more tender characteristics of her beauty. The peculiar tone of her mind fulfilled the promises of her features, and was thoughtful and elevated in the highest degree. As a gazer could not look upon the loveliness of her face and turn away again without regret, so those able to appreciate her beauty of intellect could not draw from its clear and rich fountains without feeling a desire to linger there perpetually and enjoy their freshness. It was her delight to exercise her superiority of mind to the improvement of those with whom she was thrown. In guiding the erring theorist into the path of truth: in unveiling the unwise philosophy of the sinful votarist of pleasure: in directing into proper channels the pursuits of her friends and companions—these were objects upon which the energies of her expansive intellect chiefly unfolded themselves. From childhood her disposition had ever been gentle, self-sacrificing and sincere. As she grew older, these natural traits, instead of being repressed by intercourse with the world, expanded through religious principle: and had recently beautifully exhibited themselves in many acts of disinterested sympathy, denial and benevolence.

The Lady Julia, younger by some years, was of a character less original and marked. She was a fresh and lovely creature, and the sunlight of a happy and innocent heart sparkled in her face. She felt pride without a shadow of envy at her sister's surpassing superiority, and looked up to her as a being of a higher order than herself. Bereft of their mother in early life, without other companions of their own sex, it would be difficult to imagine a stranger bond of union than that existing between these two sisters.

Such were the daughters of the Earl of D——. He the father, stood in the deep recess of a window, his eye thoughtful and his lips compressed, as if absorbed in some unpleasant reflections. He was in the very prime of life, and of a mien and air strikingly noble: so much so, that Bessie Gray could not but feel, as she looked on him, that if birth has indeed the power of setting its seal upon the form, this was never more conspicuous than in the lofty person of the descendant of a race by whose memorials she was surrounded.

Extended upon a couch, lay a young man of about twenty years: loosely attired in a dressing-gown of black velvet, his whole appearance stamped with the fatigue of travel.

Pacing the floor was Sir Charles Seymour, the lover of the Lady Alice, who had, with her brother, just arrived from London.

Bessie Gray stood fascinated, gazing at the scene; when suddenly the earl broke the silence which had hitherto been observed, and said abruptly—

"My son, what news from court? has King Charles given any more proof of his zeal against the heretics?"

"No," was the reply, "but the duke has given another proof of his folly: he has allowed them a grant of land: and a fresh cargo are to sail in a few days."

"Truly I am astonished," answered the father, and

his pale cheek flushed. "I should think the land had godly savor enough from those who are already gone: the vile, disloyal hypocrites! But if reports are true the bears and Indians will soon cool their enthusiasm."

"But," said Sir Charles, "the most singular trait about this people is, that the more they are persecuted, the more they flourish."

"And may not that indicate the goodness of their cause?" murmured a soft voice that struck the ear of Bessie Gray with its sweet and rich distinctness.

"Oh!" said the earl, turning with a stern glance toward his eldest daughter, "a young lady who is so much wiser than all her relations had better give the finish to her preference, and join the holy fanatics."

"And if I should, it would be but emulating the noble example of those who have already proved that they prized religious freedom above every other privilege," urged the Lady Alice.

"I confess," said her lover, smiling half contemptuously, "there is danger of my becoming a convert, if I listen to these vindications from such gentle lips. Do you not think so?" he added, turning to her brother.

"Disturb not my dreams," replied the latter, in a tone of mock gravity. "Even now I am picturing this fair devotee in the homely garb of these saintly dissemblers. But, my pious sister, you must lay aside that tapestry and accustom your fair fingers to more humble employment."

He paused: for a choking sob smote upon his ear. His sister made no reply: but rising, she walked slowly to the door, her step unsteady, and her face of a deadly paleness.

As she passed out, the earl cast on her a stern and angry glance of disapproval, and said: "Henry, this is no theme for jesting. If I had serious reason to believe that a child of mine would ever so disgrace her birth as to assimilate with these religious rebels, that moment should she become an outcast from my heart and home."

Such scenes were of daily occurrence, and were bitter trials to the feelings of Lady Alice. But the time was coming when the thorns upon her path, thick set and constant, would give her reason to bless the lessons of endurance these occasions were teaching her.

In a few moments a light hand was laid on the arm of Bessie Gray, and the same sweet voice she had heard before, said: "you wished to see me: but this is not a fit place for a private interview." And the Lady Alice led the way to her chamber.

There everything was costly and elegant: yet it was simply in accordance with the fashion of the times—the result of a certain style due to her rank in society, rather than a matter of selfish luxury. Her first care on entering, was to lock the door to prevent intrusion. She then opened the letter which she received from Bessie Gray, who watched her countenance as she read. Her cheek flushed and faded, and her frame shook: but after a time she became more composed, and, covering her face with her hands, she breathed a silent, fervent prayer that she might do her duty in the might of a strength that was not her own.

"I ask until to-morrow to decide, and will call at the cottage by twelve o'clock with my answer."

The door had scarcely closed upon the retiring form of the humble messenger, when a servant summoned the Lady Alice to the library below.

On her entrance, Sir Charles approached, and throwing his arm about her, said: "Alice, I have sent for you to beg you to forget our foolish remarks in the drawing-room. None of us spoke seriously in classing you among those ignorant enthusiasts. But your sweetness of disposition, dearest, seems in this instance to have overcome your customary sound judgment, and to have led you to apologize for a set of which your better reason must certainly disapprove."

The struggle in Lady Alice's mind was great as she listened to these words. She felt that in honor she ought to avow her private connection with the people he so bitterly denounced. But the woman triumphed, and she could not find courage to brave the anger and contempt of one so dear to her. She only laid her head on his shoulder and wept there.

"Alice," he said, tenderly, "did my last words convey reproof that they have affected you so deeply? But surely it cannot be otherwise than that your usual good sense had deserted you when you took the part of those fanatics, whom, for the sake of your tears and my sympathies, we will dismiss for the future."

"One word more about them," she replied, looking up with recovered self-possession, and her wonted dignity—and she thought of the letter she had a few moments before received, and felt that on his reply hung the tenor of her answer to that letter, and the decision of her destiny. "Would it change the nature of your feelings for me," she asked, "were you to know that I felt not merely indulgence toward the sect alluded to, but also union of sentiment and faith?"

He looked almost seriously at her for a moment as he replied: "Alice, it is for the superiority of your mind, as well as for the charms of your person that I have loved you, and through that I now look forward with such happiness to your becoming my companion in the dearest of all relations. But could I think it possible for you to evince such puerility of character as to forsake the religion of your father and the church of England, all my hopes of happiness in our union would be destroyed. But how foolish," he added, "to be discussing thus seriously a question so absurd; or why suppose a case that can never occur?"

At that instant, before she had time to reply, dinner was announced.

That night the Lady Alice resigned herself to communion with her own heart and with her God. We will not occupy the attention of the reader by violating all the secrets of that lonely room: nor lay open the severe conflict she sustained. Appealing for guidance to the throne of Heaven, where pure and humble prayer is never unheard, whether inspired by holy trust, or merely prompted by the urgency of mortal need, the result was a clear and calm conviction that it was best for her to leave home and friends, and a full confidence that the trial was required of her in wisdom and mercy. The remarks made that day by her father and lover had convinced her that longer

concealment of her religious tenets would be highly dishonorable. This consideration was the chief, if not the sole motive in deciding her to avail herself of the opportunity now offered her, of leaving a land which was daily becoming less tolerant to her faith; and a home, to which she was at length assured, she must by her avowal of that faith, forfeit her natural claims.

Her decision was made, and she arose from her knees, glided softly to her desk, and meekly bending over it, wrote as correctly as she could to her lover, informing him of a change in her intentions, requesting him to make no struggle in claiming her past promises, as it was now impossible for her ever to become his.

The morning came, and found her externally the same as before, watchful of all in which the good of happiness of others was concerned; and even the expression of her countenance was but slightly altered. Her breakfast, however, was a meal of pretence rather than reality, and as soon as it was over, she left the castle to bear her answer to the cottage.

In returning, she crossed the park, and threw herself in a shady nook upon the turf, that the gentle breeze might cool her burning brow. She had received no answer to the letter to her lover which had been handed to him soon after it was written. She had in it endeavored to make her rejection of him clear and decisive, in spite of the gentle words in which that determination was clothed. Yet with the inconsistency of one who loves, she now wondered that he should submit to that rejection without appeal. She was startled from her reflections by the voice of him who was the subject of them. He had approached her unheard, the mossy turf giving no echo to his tread.

He came forward, greeted her kindly, and said in a low, subdued tone, "Alice, I have known you so long and so well that I feel assured caprice is impossible to your nature—least of all toward me. Why then, after permitting me to hope so long, have you suddenly destroyed that hope, just as circumstances have made our immediate union desirable? I have lived for months upon the anticipation of the future which was to make you mine: what has happened to break my dream? Why, oh, why am I to lose my heart's best hope?"

She had continued silently to weep by his side since his first allusion to their love. What answer should she make? what reason should she give? She sat in doubt, and her thoughts imagined her near separation from him—a separation without term or limit—and she felt then for the first time the full force of her attachment for him. It was the severest drop in the cup of her present trials thus to sacrifice her love to her religion.

Again her lover questioned her, while he pressed her fondly and sadly to his heart.

At length, in a faltering voice she replied: "Events have occurred of late——" and she stopped.

"What events, my Alice? Are you to reject me and not even tell me why?"

"I cannot, Charles, it is impossible. This only believe—that I have loved you, and do love you with the fondest and firmest affection that ever woman felt:

I have thought it happiness to walk in the same path where you had walked: that the tones of your voice have haunted me like a pleasant dream. And yet we must part. And God grant that whoever you may hereafter choose to fill my place may love you as I have loved." She looked up at him as she spoke with a woman's holy confidence—more beautiful, more touching from a slight mingling of consciousness and maiden bashfulness.

"No, Alice," said her lover, "I give you no boy's affection, which can fade, or change, or turn to another object. Your image will go with me to the grave."

There was a pause. Alice pressed the hand she held, and rose as if to bid farewell. Her lover detained her.

"Have patience with me but a moment," said he. "Whatever may be your reasons for this wild, this unexpected resolution, it cannot surely last forever. Set me a term of hope: say you will be mine ten, twenty years hence, and I shall not depart utterly comfortless."

No, he would free him from all pledge, and leave the future to that God on whom she depended for strength to do her duty. And in a few brief, but explicit words, she refused this last request, destroyed the remaining hopes of him she loved so tenderly; to whom, in spite of her feminine reserve, she had protested that love: and faltering out the earnest "God bless you," which she knew was to be answered by his own farewell, she turned to leave him. A pleading look: a sentence she scarcely heard: a moment that she never might forget: and the Lady Alice and Sir Charles Seymour parted never to meet again with the hopes of youth before them.

When the Lady Alice reached the castle, the painful flush which had crimsoned her cheek during her interview with her lover had subsided. A death-like paleness, however, evinced in some measure the deep emotion she had undergone.

Julia was at her toilet, and sprang forward to meet her as she entered the dressing-room.

"My dear sister," she said, "company has arrived from London: and here have I been lecturing this awkward curl for the last ten minutes, but it will not fall gracefully all I can do. But no one can accuse you of such vanity, for I verily believe you have not glanced in your mirror since morning: and that plain dress is so becoming without any ornament. Yet you look pallid:—stay, let me remodel you, or Sir Charles will say I have stolen your gems, as well as your bloom in very spite. See," she added, as Alice sat passively gazing on her, "I have tied this scarf in a true lover's knot, and it has become quite graceful under my magic touch." Then with a bright smile, she took her sister's arm, and they descended together to the crowded drawing-room.

With surpassing self-control, the Lady Alice exerted herself to entertain the gentlemen who crowded around her. But there are moments when depression so destroys the elasticity of our spirits that the effort of concealment we are most anxious to make becomes impossible. Lofty and self-possessed as she was, and studious to seem cheerful as usual, there were times

when she turned with a vacant and absent expression to ask the repetition of phrases, while her sad heart swelled well nigh to bursting, in the attempt to prison back her tears.

"I have come to make kind, not rude remarks, dear Alice," said her brother, pressing through the knot of gentlemen, and taking a seat beside her. "Let me present you with this to make amends for my offence yesterday." And he clasped a bracelet on her arm. "Now let us hear one of your plaintive ballads."

This was a trial she would gladly have been spared. But she could not refuse the request of one so dear to her, and she mechanically seated herself at the harp, and selected a melody:—if selection that could be called which was rather the result of a sudden burst of feeling beyond her power to control. Both she and Julia were proficient in music: but there was a difference in their voices, and it was this—the singing of Julia was superior in execution, and charmed most at the moment; that of Alice lived in the memory long after Julia's most exquisite performance was forgotten—the one gratified the ear; the other vibrated on the heart.

Her father stood by proudly gazing on her as she sang. How could he fail to be proud of such a child. He was anticipating the time when, as the wife of Sir Charles, she should take her place at court. How well she would grace that noble station with her lovely person, her gifted mind, and rare accomplishments! Such were the thoughts that suggested themselves to the earl as he stood by and listened to her song with the fulness of a parent's pride. Alas! could all these shield her from those griefs which some time or other must obtrude upon the brightest and smoothest path on earth? could they avert sickness and pain, the loss of friends, the certain hour of death? No. But ere long they were destined to serve holier purposes than the homage of the idle crowd by which she was now surrounded. That beauty was fated to shine at one day not far distant beside the ill and the dying in foreign lands: that mind to unfold its stores for the encouragement of companions in suffering: that voice to send its accents up in prayer in many an hour of need.

The chords of the harp had just ceased to sound when the tears which the Lady Alice had so long endeavored to repress would no more be restrained: they rose to her eyes, and trembled on the dark lashes. Rising and turning away, she whispered to Julia to take her seat at the instrument: and seizing the moment when her sister was the object of attention, she retired to a recess and wiped away the betrayal of her emotion. But her unwonted moment of sadness had not passed unnoticed. A movement beside her caused her to look up. Her father stood by and took her hand.

"You are ill, you are agitated, my dear child," he said: "we will excuse your absence from the drawing-room until you can appear again with fresh bloom: you had better retire."

Her lovely face beamed on him for a moment with an intense and eager affection: and she drew closer to him as if seeking for the kiss he had been used to give her in the days of her childhood. He stooped

and pressed his lips to her brow, but did not speak: he could not—her simple and entire affection was a rebuke to the mingling of pride that alloyed his.

"Am I not a dear and precious brother," said Henry, as she passed through the door, "to procure your banishment from the drawing-room so sensibly."

"You *are* dear and precious," she replied, turning on him a glance of love so pure, that ever after, in the long years of her absence, it haunted him like the dream of a seraph. It was the *last* look from his favorite sister that ever met his eye: those were the last tones from her voice that ever fell upon his ear.

She reached her own room: the agony of concealment was over. The midnight drew near: and the preparations for her departure were completed. Her plainest clothing, the miniature of her lost mother, and a few other relics of trifling value, were all she took from the boundless wealth of her father.

Taking up her light, she now proceeded with stealthy steps to the apartment of her sister, and approached the bed where Julia lay, wishing, but hardly daring to expect that she might have sunk into a peaceful slumber. Her wishes were gratified, for Julia slept.

Seating herself upon the side of the couch, she looked steadfastly upon the countenance of her who lay with a placid smile upon her lips—calm and peaceful as if she had found joy in escaping from the allurements of fashion, and closing her eyes upon the empty pleasures of earth, sought serenity and contentment in the untiring freshness of a land of dreams. The face of a sleeper, except where age has stamped its indelible footmarks, almost always reminds us of the days of infancy. And Lady Alice's thoughts, as she gazed upon her sister, went wandering back to the nursery, and the happy time when she had played with her beneath the hawthorn, and plucked for her the sweet spring flowers. Then came the memory of after years, when the dying mother's hand was placed upon her head, commending Julia to her care: and with the memory of those years came rushing upon her thoughts afresh the bitter extent of the sacrifice she was making to her religion. Here was that bright being before her, radiant in more than the beauty of childhood—no longer the object only of her watchful love and solicitude: but also her friend and dear companion—still, however, in need of her counsels and guidance. But they were to be severed; to part forever, and tread the path of life separately. Oh! beautiful, and rare as beautiful that piety and self-devotion which could triumph over so strong a tie. Its kindred feeling must be felt before it can be fully appreciated. It can never have been comprehended by worldly minds.

"Farewell, my own dear sister," she murmured; and stooping down, she kissed her gently, and arranged the wandering tresses of her hair, while tears of unutterable tenderness burst from her eyes. "You will think of me sometimes: yes, even among all your other sources of interest and occupation, I know you will think of me. And when you do, remember that my fate is in God's hands, and that what he wills is best."

* * * * *

The voyage was effected with much difficulty and hazard. Oh! the monotony of that long and boisterous sea-course. When the cry of "land! land!" was shouted all rushed upon deck.

"The breaking waves dashed high,
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods, against a stormy sky,
Their giant branches toss'd;

And the heavy night hung dark,
The hills and waters o'er,
When that band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore."

In disembarking, the water was found so shallow that they were forced to wade; and thus the very act of getting on land sowed in the Lady Alice the seeds of that disease which afterward produced her death.

When they reached the wild shore, they knelt upon the flinty Rock of Plymouth, which a grateful posterity has marked, and built an altar to religious freedom: and the consequences of that act are continually unfolding themselves as time advances.

Wasted by the rough and wearisome voyage, ill supplied with provisions, that self-devoted band (whose emigration has imparted a character of intelligence and a moral elevation to New England, which it has nobly sustained to the present hour), found themselves at the opening of winter on a barren and bleak coast, in a severe climate, with the ocean on one side and the wilderness on the other, and none to show them kindness or bid them welcome. Danger, too, in a new form pressed upon them. Struggling Aborigines began to visit the settlement: more than one alarm had occurred, and several acts of violence had been committed. Indeed, so constant was the apprehension of danger from the savage that regular watch was set, and maintained nightly. The weather, too, increased to the rigor of winter, attended by successive falls of snows, until the earth was entirely covered with firmly compressed masses of the frozen element. This, with a dreadful pestilence which raged in the colony, reduced the settlers to the extremity of suffering.

Then and not till then were the heights and depths of the Lady Alice's character fully appreciated. Some pictures appear best in one light, some in another. Some most excite our admiration in strong, clear light, some touch our hearts and win our praise in soft and shadowy dimness. And thus it is in characters. Some stand boldly out, their noblest qualities strengthened and developed by the necessity which calls them forth. Even so it was with the Lady Alice. Noble powers of endurance and self-denial, that, had she remained in her father's halls, might ever have slumbered unobserved, now shone in surpassing beauty. Cheerfully and uncomplainingly she endured her share of the bitter privations to which the little band were exposed: and through all self-regardless and devoted, her zeal and solicitude in behalf of her companions in wretchedness never wearied. It dwelt unpretendingly, but actively in her bosom, like a great and moving principle of life. She quietly busied herself in administering to those, who, notwithstanding the severity of the weather, were employed in exploring the surrounding wilderness, and guarding against the attacks of the savage. Among the sick and the dying,

she went and came like a ministering angel, bringing consolation to the sufferer and mourner.

At this crisis, a ship sailed for England. The Lady Alice embraced the opportunity of addressing a letter to her father, explaining the cause of her deserting her home and those dear to her: beseeching his forgiveness for her union with the sect her conscience approved, and begging him at least to remember her kindly, and let her name not altogether cease with her presence to be a household word.

By the first return from England she looked for a reply. A letter was handed her. "My father's writing," she said, pressing it to her lips, while her temples throbbed and her heart beat tumultuously. It was some moments before her trembling fingers could break the seal. At length she did so. The date was London. Her own letter was returned unopened: and a few sentences, brief, harsh and decisive, with no word of affliction at the commencement, no term of endearment at the close. They ran thus:

"For the last time I address one whom I no longer own as a daughter. My resolution is never to hold any correspondence with her who so far forgot her birth as to leave her father's house clandestinely. Let those who tempted her to sin support and comfort her. From that place in my heart which she has deserted at my hearth I cast her off now and forever."

From the hour she read that fatal scroll a marked change in her health grew visible. Her step became languid, and her color, which upon the slightest emotion mounted to her cheek, was immediately followed by an unnatural paleness. She herself seemed at first unconscious of any important change: and continued to exert herself far more than was consistent with her situation. But the sure symptoms of consumption were rapidly gaining ground. The climate, too, was unsuited to her peculiar constitution, and a series of bad colds left a chronic cough and a hectic fever. Deep hollows traced themselves beneath eyes which grew even brighter in their loveliness: and in the centre of the fair, smooth cheek burned one deep spot—fatal sign to those who have witnessed the progress of the most deceitful of our national maladies. Still the expression of her countenance increased in interest and beauty, and the spirit grew more distinctly visible there—even as a lamp shines brightest through the most fragile and transparent vase.

At this period, she became aware of her condition, and wrote the following letter to her father, enclosing it in a few lines to Sir Charles Seymour, containing a request that he would use his influence in gaining it a perusal, as it was a dying communication.

"I write you, my dear, my unforgotten father, the last letter this hand will ever trace. Till now, it would have been a crime to write to you—perhaps it is so still. But dying as I am, and divorced from all earthly thoughts and remembrances, save your displeasure, I feel that I cannot quite collect my mind for the last hour until I again entreat your forgiveness. I will not afflict you, my dear father, by dwelling upon the anguish your letter gave me, nor the many tears I have shed upon it: but in the long night watches of my illness, and in the daily yearnings of my heart in this strange land, your angry image is ever with me.

I would fain have your pardon, if but that I might turn away from the last regret that binds me to earth.

"There is one other thought that bears heavily on my mind. I know not what it is—perhaps my approaching death—makes me seem to have obtained the right to be your monitor. Forgive me, then, if I implore you to think earnestly and deeply of the great ends of life: think of them as one might think who is anxious to gain a distant home, and who will not be diverted from his way. Oh! could you know how solemn and thrilling a joy comes over me as I nurse the hope that we may meet at length and forever!

"Again I entreat your forgiveness, dear father. May God bless and watch over you, and elevate your heart to Him. My love and care for you will, I feel, ere long cease in the grave. Farewell."

* * * * *

"Lady Alice, this is one of the most lovely days we have had since we came to America. Don't you think if you were to come to the window a little while it would do you good. There is an English ship coming in, and everything smells so sweetly and looks so brightly. Do let me wheel the chair nearer."

The dying girl turned her head toward her gentle nurse, and a short, hollow cough preceded her attempt to speak.

"I have been wishing to move for some time," said she, "but I feel so weak that I dread the smallest exertion: and the stir and the sunshine almost fatigue me while I gaze on them. I love the silence of this little shaded room, and your tranquil and watchful face better than any other sound or sight."

Bessie Gray bent and kissed the invalid's brow, shut the reading desk with a gentle hand, and slowly advanced the sick girl's chair to the window.

The blinds were drawn aside, and the breeze that swept through the open casement brought with it the rich scent of geraniums and roses. It was the Sabbath. Just at that moment, the voices from the church below stole upon the silence with their solemn notes. There was something in the strain of this sudden music that was so kindred with the holy repose of the scene, that it struck upon the feelings of the Lady Alice with irresistible power, and brought her heart into keeping with the whole.

The moment of devotion passed away: and as she continued gazing, her wandering thoughts and yearning heart flew back in dreams to the halls of her father, and the forms of those she had forsaken. At that instant her eyes reverted to the English ship, with all its swelling canvass spread, coming proudly and gallantly on, a welcome visitor to that little settlement, where so many pined for news from home.

"Bring me the telescope, Bessy," she said.

Bessie Gray obeyed, and watched the expression of her face as she gazed long and earnestly at the captain's boat, which was now struggling to the shore.

"Bessie," said Lady Alice, faintly: "the passengers are landing. But that lady's dress is too gay, and that cavalier's step too proud for pilgrims. Who can they be?"

The silence had remained unbroken for some time,

and the Lady Alice had laid aside the telescope, and overcome with the slight exertion, had closed her eyes as if in pain, when the door was opened suddenly, and her faded, dying form was folded to her sister Julia's breast.

"My dear, my only sister," was all Lady Alice could articulate, as she sank back insensible.

When she again lifted up her eyes, they encountered those of her father, and one to whom her unwearied affections had strangely clung: and a smile, sweet, comforting, and full of hope passed the lips which were about to close forever as she murmured: "It is pleasant to die now and thus. Give me your blessing, dear father," and she clung caressingly to his breast. "Put your hand on my head, and say if my conduct has given you a moment's pain, I am forgiven."

"Forgiven! my child," exclaimed he, in a burst of uncontrollable emotion, "never did I feel what an angel had left my hearth until now. Here on my knees, beside your dying form, in sight of God and angels, I forgive you."

The physician took his hand, and strove to draw him aside, but the attempt caught the eye of the sufferer.

"Let him stay," said she, faintly; "I know I am dying, but death is not yet in my heart. Can you not give me a moment's strength? a few words are all I want to say: I cannot die without saying them."

A glass of restorative drops was given. Either they revived her, or expiring nature felt the unconquerable strength of affection. Even to the last she sat half upright, supported by her lover. There was now no disguise between them: all that had been before obscure was now rendered clear as noonday. And in a low, touching voice, she endeavored to convince him that a religious life is not incompatible with happiness: that practical piety is not opposed to refinement, and that an intellectual being can have no higher aim than the establishment of moral good. "Promise, dear Charles," and she clasped his hands in her relaxing and wan fingers, "that you will no longer misuse the faculties which God has given you, but devote to purposes of religion the powers of your expansive mind, and the resources of your ample fortune."

Again her head drooped, and she was, for some moments, motionless. Life was fast ebbing away. She lay white as the pillow on which she rested for the last time.

All at once her eyes kindled, and she again raised herself up, put her hand under the pillow and drew from thence a small bible.

"Father," exclaimed she, "this has been my constant companion: let it be henceforth yours. It is my latest gift—may it teach you, even as it has taught me, the blessed hope in which I die. Not in vain have these divine words been spoken whose comfort is with me even now. I die in their glorious faith, and in their cheering hope. Could I leave you as I do, beloved father, with words of consolation, but for that divine belief whose hope is a happy immortality."

She then, with her hands raised in the attitude of prayer, and her eyes cast upward, poured her soul out in the fervent language of one standing on the brink of eternity, acknowledging neither hope nor title to an inheritance in the regions of eternal peace, save what depends on the sanction of a holy Redeemer, and the mercy of a gracious God.

A solemn silence succeeded this soul-felt prayer: and Sir Charles bent over that hushed and death-like form. "Alice, beloved Alice"—but that faithful and loving heart was deaf to his voice, and the film grew rapidly over the eye which still with fondness sought him out through the shade and agony of death.

Sense and consciousness were gone: yet the parted lips moved inaudibly. They stooped to catch the last sound as she murmured incoherently, "Father—Charles—Julia—seek—inheritance—fate—not."

The breath was stilled: the pure spirit passed to another world. Her last thoughts had proved a forgetfulness of death in her anxiety for the eternal happiness of those she loved on earth.

Sir Charles looked upon her cold corpse with tearful eyes: and turned away with a deep and abiding change within him. He saw the fresh green sod heaped over it, and kneeling upon the sacred turf made a vow to devote himself to that cause to which the departed had sacrificed her life, that in their death, at least, they might not be divided.

Her grave is among those of the early Pilgrims of New England: but her spirit is reaping its everlasting recompense for the sacrifices of time.

Such is the touching story of Lady Alice D——: otherwise the Lady Arabella Johnson, whose history a sainted brother Pilgrim has beautifully expressed in these brief words: "She left the pomp and pleasures of an earldom, and took New England in her way to Paradise."

THE VILLAGE GOSSIPS.

BY J. S. BELL

THE rays of the setting sun, which had deserted the vallies below, still lingered upon the heights above the village of S—, as if loth to quit a scene so rich in every element of rural beauty, and bathed in an atmosphere of gold the form of a young hunter, who stood leaning on his rifle and gazing upon the summer sunset. Though covered by a canopy of richly tinted clouds, the glowing orb had strength enough to struggle through the vapor, and, to the right and left, as far as the eye could reach, hundreds of mountain pinnacles received the mellow radiance on their leaf-crowned summits, which shone as if covered with myriads of gems, sparkling with countless, varied hues of golden green. Gradually, as the quivering rays grew fainter, the emerald tints assumed a deeper dye; one by one the dying peaks were forced to lose their short-lived splendors, the dusky shades of evening crept upward like huge ghosts along the mountain side, and the whole of the bright prospect faded away into the uniform gray of summer twilight. Our young hunter, whose spirit was attuned in unison with nature's sweetest harmonies, felt all the influence of the peaceful scene, and, fixing his eyes upon the full-orbed moon which had just begun to illuminate the Eastern heavens, sank into a pensive reverie.

Not many minutes had elapsed, when the stillness of the forest was interrupted by a strain of music, so clear, so soft, so exquisitely sweet, that the solitary listener was half disposed to think that it proceeded from some tuneful Sylph, rather than from one of mortal mould; and this fancy was not dissipated when, by cautiously stealing round a little thicket of under-wood, he beheld the singer. It was a young and lovely maiden, who had been sportively decorating herself with such a profusion of wild flowers, woven into such a variety of fantastic wreaths and many colored garlands, that it would not have required any great luxuriance of imagination to have converted her into a wood-nymph or a sylvan goddess, or even into one of the "tuneful Nine." She sat upon a moss grown rock, with her head thrown back against a tree, and had doubtless been gazing upon the glorious sunset, until her rapturous admiration overflowed in the sweet strains of the "evening hymn," which now vibrated on her lips. Her flower-besprinkled hair fell about her shoulders in rich, luxuriant tresses, and wherever an ebon ringlet was lifted by the Summer breeze, it disclosed a skin of dazzling whiteness, which was only rivalled in purity by the pearls displayed within the ruby casket of her parted lips. The color of her eyes could not be seen, but they must have been charming beyond comparison if their beauty could much excel that of the snowy lids and jetty lashes by which their orbs were shaded.

Our young hunter was rooted to the spot where he stood with surprise and admiration. Though not a resident in the village of S—, he had been a frequent visitor to its beautiful valley, and he knew that though it could boast of many pretty faces, it never numbered among its daughters any one that could be at all compared with the vision of transcendent loveliness which had been so suddenly revealed to his astonished gaze. "Dazzled and drunk with beauty," he lost all consciousness of surrounding objects, and surrendered both eyes and ears to that magic influence which from that moment was to rule his destiny.

The brief limits which we have assigned to our little tale will not allow us to enlarge upon the interview which now took place between the youth and maiden; we will merely give the reader some idea of its results, both immediate and more remote. Unlike very many of those beauties which captivate "at first sight," Alice Masdyn had a soul which did not dishonor the beautiful temple in which it was enshrined, and when young Allowby, the hunter, found means to consummate the acquaintance so romantically begun, his reason fully ratified the choice his eyes had made so rashly on the Lurra mountain.

Alice was on a visit to her aunt, Mrs. Trippe, who was one of the female magnates of S—, and, on the evening above referred to, had been strolling on the mountain, with a party of young people, after visiting a mineral spring which had often afforded an excuse for similar rambles to the more juvenile portion of the population. In her eager search for some rare flower which was said to be a denizen of Mount Lurra, she had wandered from her companions, until, overcome by fatigue, she had thrown herself upon the rock where George Allowby found her. He accompanied her home, and three weeks afterward, by the same moss-covered rock, after witnessing a similar sunset, she hid her burning blushes in the bosom of an accented lover—an affianced husband.

Time rolled on, and the wedding day was fixed. It was to take place in S—, and under the auspices of her aunt; for Alice was an orphan, and entirely dependent upon her own exertions for a livelihood, with the exception of the little assistance that could be given by her only brother, a lieutenant in the navy.

It was late in the afternoon of a beautiful day in October, that Alice, with her friend and expectant bridesmaid, Julia Cramer, arrived on her second visit at the village of S—. She had never looked more beautiful, for her heart was full of hope and joy, and it glowed on her cheek and danced in her happy eyes. She was to meet George Allowby, who had been called to the South by important business, a few weeks before, and the marriage was to be solemnized as soon as possible.

"Where is George?" asked Alice, of her cousin Sarah, the moment she alighted,

"He is not here," was the brief response.

"Not here, cousin!"

"He is not in S—."

Poor Alice trembled excessively, and was hardly able to enter the house. Her aunt and her cousin Margaret received her with a coldness which increased her anxiety, until it amounted to positive terror, and, when the former put a sealed letter into her hand, her emotion was such that she was utterly unable to open it. With a convulsive grasp which smothered the words her lips were striving to articulate, she handed the letter to Julia Cramer, who managed to break the seal, though her sympathizing heart had rendered her fingers almost as powerless as those of her friend. Alice placed the open sheet upon her lap, brushed away the tears which were starting into her eyes, and, almost the next moment, with that awful shriek which is the death-knell of a breaking heart, fell backward on the floor, devoid of sense or motion. Poor Julia was so much affected herself as to be unable to assist her friend, but Mrs. Trippe and her daughters were "strong minded women," and were never known, in all their lives, to manifest one atom of emotion beyond what was strictly decorous and "proper." They accordingly proceeded, with all due deliberation, to do what was necessary for the restoration of their kinsman, and, after she had somewhat recovered, took the earliest opportunity to inform her that it was altogether desirable that she should return to the place whence she came with all convenient promptitude.

The wretched girl was so stupefied with what she had just read, that she was incapable of acting for herself, and hardly able to understand what was said to her. Her friend Julia, indignant at the conduct of her aunt and cousins, which she considered unfeeling under any possible circumstances, took the unhappy maiden by the arm and hurried her away. In their route to the stage-office—whence a return coach was fortunately about to start—they encountered several persons, who had, within a few weeks, been among the most devoted of Alice's "dear five hundred friends." A stare of cold and pitiless curiosity was the only token of recognition they had now to bestow upon the miserable creature who had dared to forfeit the good will of her rich relations. But how? That was the very question that Julia Cramer had been asking to no purpose for the last half hour. Poor Alice! all she knew about it was contained in the bitterly laconic epistle of George Allowby, and that, indeed, was all she cared to know. In those few words, incomprehensible as they were, lay concealed the material of a life-long agony; and as the ear which has been deafened by a thunderbolt becomes insensible to all minor sounds, so did this grief-stricken soul disregard all sorrows less poignant than that which at one fell stroke had blighted all its budding hopes forever. The letter contained merely these words:—

"Madam—Your own conscience will tell you why it is that you can henceforth be nothing more than a stranger to
GEORGE ALLOWBY."

The two young ladies were sitting in the stage-office, and, with a cheek flushed with indignation, Julia Cramer was crushing in her hand the fatal paper which she had just perused. At this moment the coach drove up, and Alice, with great difficulty, managed to reach it, supported by the arm of her friend. They were hardly seated, when a rabble rout of boys surrounded the carriage, hooting and screaming.

"Stop thief!—stop thief! There's the woman what stole the gloves from Smith's store! Thief!—thief!"

The driver cracked his whip, but, before the coach could be started, a handful of mud and gravel was flung into the window, and, tearing away the gossamer veil, came rudely into contact with the soft cheek of Alice Masdyn. Alas! what a change for the petted, caressed, and almost worshipped darling of two little weeks ago! Alas, what a shock for the peculiarly refined and sensitive feelings of one who was "the very soul of honor!" And what had done this? The wretched, idle, gossiping, slanderous, lying tongues of half a dozen "busy-bodies!"

Poor Alice was taken to the house of Mrs. Cramer, Julia's mother, where she remained in a state of imbecility, mental and bodily, having never recovered from the shock produced by that fatal letter. About a fortnight after this occurrence, Lieutenant Masdyn returned somewhat unexpectedly, from the Pacific, to find his beloved, his almost idolized sister, a miserable, mindless wreck. The sight almost drove him to distraction, and, if Allowby had been within his reach, there would probably have been another and a bloodier act to be added to our tragedy. Fortunately for all parties the faithless lover was not to be found; he had sailed for Europe almost immediately after leaving S—, and Masdyn could not leave his sister to pursue him. The lieutenant's next object was to trace the foul slander to its source, and, unpleasant as was the task, he resolved to undertake it without a moment's delay, and for that purpose went immediately to S—.

The first inquiry was made of Mr. Smith, the store-keeper. He informed the young officer that he had lost several pairs of gloves from his store, and, after a close cross-examination, he confessed that he had heard it reported that Miss Masdyn had taken them; but he denied most positively that he had ever said so, or that he had ever in any way given currency to the rumor. The lieutenant next called upon Mrs. Trippe. She received him with a triple proportion of stateliness, and informed him that she was most unwillingly compelled to say that there could be no doubt of his sister's guilt, since she had received her information from her very particular friend, Mrs. Harbottle, who had kindly taken upon herself the melancholy duty of acquainting her with a fact which had long been notorious among the inhabitants of S—, viz: that her niece had in several instances purloined gloves and other articles from the store of Mr. Smith, and had even had the effrontery to confess it in the presence of several highly respectable ladies.

Young Masdyn, with great difficulty, controlled his indignation during this interview with Mrs. Trippe, and felt that he could not trust himself to say a single

world in reply; he, therefore, took his leave as soon as she had done speaking, and bent his steps to the residence of Mrs. Harbottle. This lady was all politeness, and all regret, and assured the young gentleman that nothing but the imperative call of duty and of conscience would have induced her to assume the unpleasant task of informing Mrs. Trippie of the real state of the case. Masdyn cut her short in the midst of a most pathetic *jeremiad*, and requested her to tell him exactly and precisely what she knew about the matter, and whence she derived her information. It was no easy thing to confine her to such narrow limits, but she was eventually brought to confess that she knew nothing about the affair, except what she had learned from Miss Penderly, and that she could not remember that Miss Penderly had said anything about repeated thefts, but she had told her that there were six pairs of gloves stolen, and that Miss Masdyn had confessed that she took them; in whose presence the confession was made she did not know.

Miss Penderly was stiff and solemn. She would have been "not at home," only the young officer happened to get a sight of her as she was reconnoitering through the parlor window. She declared positively that Mrs. Harbottle had misrepresented her, for she had only spoken of *three* pairs of gloves, and that she had received her information from Mr. Plush, the apothecary.

Rejoiced that he had found a *man* to deal with at last, Lieutenant Masdyn hastened to the shop of Mr. Plush; but a disappointment awaited him, for the man of drugs was not at home, and he would probably be absent for several days. The mistress of the establishment, however, in the course of certain remarks which she thought proper to make, gave our young officer to understand that Mr. Plush had received his account of the matter from Mrs. Hackley, over the way, and to Mrs. Hackley he went forthwith. She declared solemnly that she had been belied among them somewhere, for she was willing to take her oath that she had spoken to Plush of *one* pair of gloves, and only one, and she had told him the very same story that Miss Twayley had told her.

Who would fatigue our readers to little purpose were

we to follow the movements of Lieutenant Masdyn from Miss Twayley to Mrs. Bean, from Mrs. Bean to Mrs. Wrench, and from Mrs. Wrench to Miss Polly Curraway; suffice it to say that Miss Polly informed him that Mrs. Bittles, from whom she had her information, had told her that she had heard the thing from Mrs. Fyler, who had heard Miss Masdyn confess it.

Believing that he had now arrived at something tangible, the lieutenant knocked at the door of Mrs. Bittles, but to his great mortification he found that this lady, one of the most important links in this chain of abominations, was not to be found. Mrs. Fyler, however, was at home, but she positively denied having ever said what was attributed to her by Mrs. Bittles. She had told Mrs. Bittles that Mrs. Carboy had told her that on one occasion while walking in the street behind Miss Masdyn and Miss Anna McLush, she had heard the former say something to the latter about *stealing a pair of gloves*. The poor lieutenant gave a groan of mingled vexation and exhaustion. His patience was sorely tried, but he was determined to ferret out the root of the matter, and, therefore, proceeded to hire a horse and ride out to Mrs. Carboy's.

The last named lady talked very loud, and talked a great deal, for the purpose of making it appear that she was a saint, and her dear friend, Mrs. Fyler, not a bit better than she should be, since "she had said that she said what she did not say." She had simply told Mrs. Fyler that she had heard Miss Masdyn say something to Miss McLush about *gloves and steel*!

The lieutenant now posted back to S— to take the deposition of Miss Anna McLush, which was in substance as follows: the day before Miss Masdyn left the village she had accompanied her to Smith's store, where they had each of them purchased a pair of gloves, and on their return to Mrs. Trippie's, Alice had made the remark—"these gloves are as tough as steel!"

We have little more to tell. Lieutenant Masdyn compelled the slanderers of his sister to make a public statement of the truth; but it was too late, for on the very day that George Allowby returned from Europe a pale and conscience-stricken man, the spirit of Alice Masdyn "returned to God who gave it."

AGREEABLE NEIGHBORS.

BY HARRY SUNDERLAND.

"You don't know what a beautiful new parlor carpet the Henleys have just bought," said my wife to me, as I came in to dinner; "and it was only a dollar and a quarter a yard. It's worth almost as much again as ours was when new, and we paid a dollar thirty-seven and a half."

"Carpets are cheaper now than they were when we bought," I returned, a little coldly.

"True. That was a long time ago. I have just been looking at ours. They are really very much defaced. Don't you think we can afford to buy new ones? I feel quite ashamed of them; they are so worn and faded."

"You did not think so indifferently of them until you saw Mrs. Henley's new one."

"Oh, yes I did. But, I thought, maybe, you might think we couldn't afford others, and so I didn't say anything about it. But now that the Henleys, who are really no better off than we are, have put down a beautiful new carpet on their parlor, I feel as if we ought to do the same. Ours look awfully shabby."

"To carpet our parlors will cost at least fifty dollars, Jane."

"Oh, no it won't, nothing like it."

"It is easy to make the calculation. Figures never lie. It will take twenty yards for each parlor."

"Not more than eighteen," replied my wife.]

"It takes five breadths, and each room is four yards long."

As I said this, I took a note from my pocket, and, in a few moments, proved the assertion I had made as to the length of the room.

"Four fives make twenty," I said, as I arose from my bent position, "and twice twenty make forty. Forty yards of carpeting at a dollar and a quarter a yard, will cost just fifty dollars."

"Ain't you mistaken?" returned my wife, who is not overly smart at figures. "Forty yards at a dollar a yard is only forty dollars. The forty quarters would make ten, certainly."

"Divide four into forty, and you have ten. Or, multiply ten by four, and you have forty. Forty yards of carpeting at a quarter of a dollar a yard, will, therefore, make ten dollars; and ten dollars added to forty dollars will make just fifty."

"True enough! But I wouldn't have thought it. Fifty dollars is a good big sum; but then, you know, we don't want parlor carpets every year. It is six or seven years since these were bought. We shall have to get new ones very soon at any rate, and we might as well buy them now as at any other time; and better too, for I don't believe they will be as cheap in six months from this."

My wife was fairly set out for new parlor carpets,

and meant to carry her point. This I understood very well, and not caring to fight a battle in which the odds were all against me, abandoned the contest, and gave my wife fifty dollars to buy the carpets, inwardly anatomizing Mrs. Henley, and wishing her a thousand miles away.

I had a very comfortable income of a thousand dollars a year, out of which I laid it down as a rule that I ought to save at least two hundred dollars. This I had been able to do for a couple of years, until, unfortunately, the Henleys moved next door, and my wife made the acquaintance of the very agreeable Mrs. Henley, whose husband received a salary of twelve hundred dollars per annum, all of which was regularly spent by the year's end. I had nearly four hundred dollars snugly laid away in the Savings Bank when the Henleys became our neighbors. The amount had already dwindled away until only two hundred remained, when the parlor carpets were to be replaced by new ones. These new neighbors and acquaintances were very agreeable people, certainly. I liked Henley very well, and my wife was perfectly fascinated with Mrs. Henley, who was a woman of some taste, but rather extravagant notions for one in her circumstances.

Our style of living had been plain from the beginning, and with this style we were both very well satisfied. At the time of our marriage I had about a thousand dollars laid by, and this sum we expended in furniture, keeping in view comfort and convenience, rather than show. For two or three years, we found it necessary to expend all that could be saved out of my salary, which, during that time, was only eight hundred dollars, in completing the comforts of our little household. After that my salary was increased, and I was able to save something. With the pleasant prospect, if health continued, of being able to save enough to purchase, in time, a comfortable dwelling, I was going on in a very self-satisfied state of mind, when the Henleys moved next door. Three weeks were allowed to go by, and then my wife suggested that it was no more than right for her to call upon our new neighbors, who were, she had ascertained, very respectable people. I had no objections to offer, and, therefore, made none; and she, accordingly, one day made the proposed complimentary visit.

"I called to see Mrs. Henley this morning," she said to me when I came home to dinner.

"Well—how did you like her?" I returned, half indifferently.

"Very much indeed," replied my wife, expressing herself warmly. "She is one of the most agreeable women I ever met—a perfect lady in her manners. She says that I am the first one who has yet called

upon her. She appeared pleased; and said that she should put me down at once in the number of her friends. They have everything very nice about them. Mahogany chairs in the parlor, which is one long room, and a beautiful marble-top centre-table. On the mantle they have a vase of flowers in the centre, and candelabras at each end."

As my wife said this, she glanced toward the mantles in our plainly furnished parlors. On one of them was a pair of cut glass lamps, and on the other nothing.

"I really think we might afford a pair of candelabras," she digressed to say. "They furnish a room so well, and only cost twelve or fifteen dollars."

I said nothing in reply; but thought our glass lamps looked very well, and that, for the mere appearance of the thing, twelve or fifteen dollars was too much for persons in our circumstances to spend for candelabras.

For some time my wife continued to run on about her agreeable neighbor. She had noticed everything in the parlor arrangement of her house, and the minutest particular of her dress, all of which she described.

Two days only elapsed before Mrs. Henley returned the call, and asked my wife if she wouldn't go shopping with her on the next day. This she promised to do, and as she had several articles to purchase herself, asked me for ten dollars with which to buy them.

"I declare!" she said to me, when I met her at dinner time, after the shopping expedition with Mrs. Henley, "I've been out the whole morning and spent all my money, without buying an article I intended to get. I was going to buy you half a dozen pocket handkerchiefs, a piece of muslin to make up, and some canton flannel for you, not one of which articles have I got."

"What have you bought?" I asked.

"I will show you," she replied, and brought out a bundle from one of her drawers. As she unrolled it, she said—"we met with some of the cheapest collars I ever saw in my life. Real French lace, and only two dollars a piece. There, just look at that?"

And my wife displayed before my eyes a worked collar that was no doubt all she alleged in regard to it, but as I was no judge, I could not be qualified to do the fact.

"Isn't it sweet?" she said.

Of course I could do no less than assent.

"And it was only two dollars and a half. Mrs. Henley bought one without a word, and I couldn't resist the temptation to do the same. I hadn't a single handsome collar to my name, and felt really ashamed when I went out with Mrs. Henley, who had on one that didn't cost less than five dollars, and mine was a mean, common looking thing, that I had before we were married."

I hadn't a word to say.

"Wasn't I right to get it?" my wife asked, looking me intently in the face.

"Certainly, my dear. You needed a fine collar, and you did right to buy one."

"Now look at this."

A rich, showy dress pattern, met my eyes.

"Isn't that lovely?" said my wife.

"It is," I returned.

"Now, how much do you think it was a yard?"

"Indeed I don't know."

"Only forty cents," said my wife, with an air of triumph. "Last season nothing like it could be had for less than fifty cents. Mrs. Henley said she had not seen anything so cheap or handsome this season, and she has been about a good deal. She took a pattern at once, and as I am in want of a good dress, I did the same. It will make up beautifully. Don't you think so?"

"Yes, I think it will." What else could I say? My wife needed a dress, and this she considered both pretty and cheap. If it pleased her, I was satisfied.

Half a dozen little matters, of which I did not clearly understand the use, completed the list of purchases—things my wife would not have dreamed of wanting had she not been out shopping with her agreeable neighbor. On the next day I furnished ten dollars more to get the muslin, canton flannel and pocket handkerchiefs, which my wife said must be had immediately. As she had been so kind as to go shopping with Mrs. Henley, that lady very kindly consented to go out with my wife. The piece of muslin was bought, but the handkerchiefs and canton flannel were omitted. The ladies saw a couple of silk bonnets, the price of which was only six dollars each, which so struck their fancies that they forthwith concluded to buy them.

"It is just the thing!" said my wife to me, drawing the really handsome and becoming bonnet upon her head, and looking twenty per cent younger and prettier. "Now don't you think so?"

"I do indeed," I could not help saying, and with a warmth of manner that greatly pleased my good wife.

"I should have had to get a winter bonnet in a few weeks, and pay at least six dollars for one neither so good nor handsome as this. They were selling off, and I could not let the opportunity for securing a bargain like this, pass."

I had nothing to advance by way of objection. Ten dollars more were supplied for shopping purposes, and the canton flannel and pocket handkerchiefs secured this time.

Thus began my wife's acquaintance with her agreeable neighbor, Mrs. Henley. From that period money went more rapidly. It cost, for shopping purposes alone, just double what it had done before. My wife's appearance and that of our two little ones was very much improved, and this was agreeable enough, but I could not help feeling that it was all costing too much. I found that, instead of having fifty dollars at the end of the quarter, to lay up, I hadn't a dollar. All was not spent in shopping, of course; but what was true in the clothing department, was true in every other department, also.

Before the Henleys had been our neighbor's three months, the glass lamps had disappeared from the mantle of our front parlor, and a set of candelabras were to be seen in their place.

Mr. Henley, upon whom my wife insisted I should call, I found an intelligent, agreeable man, and frequently spent a pleasant evening with him. As for the ladies, they were soon as thick as pick-pockets,

and saw each other every day. From the first week of their acquaintance, the ideas of my wife began gradually to enlarge, and her taste to become refined. The thought of economy gradually faded from her mind. Mrs. Henley became her model, and Mrs. Henley's ideas of things her ideas. She used, every fall, to put up a few jars of preserves—and these were generally confined to peaches and plums, the cost of which did not exceed five dollars. But this, the first season of her acquaintance with Mrs. Henley, she was visited with a regular preserving mania. Quinces, peaches, pears, plums; pine apples, watermelon rinds, and the dear knows what all! were boiled down in the best double refined loaf sugar, and sealed up in glass jars, the number of which I will not pretend to give. Branded peaches, too, had to be put up in the best white brandy, for which I paid somewhere between three and four dollars a gallon. Altogether, I am sure the brandy, fruit, sugar, and jars did not cost a fraction less than thirty dollars. I said so to my wife, but she scouted the idea as preposterous.

And so the thing went on for more than a year, before the new carpets were bought, my deposits in the Savings' Bank steadily decreasing, until I had not over two hundred dollars left. I really began to feel serious, and to wish that Mrs. Henley had been married to the man in the moon.

The new carpets looked very fine. I had to acknowledge that. But the chairs and the card-table appeared rather ashamed of themselves in such genteel company.

"Mrs. Henley says our chairs will never do."

I had been looking for this.

"Confound Mrs. Henley!"

Don't suppose, reader, that I uttered this aloud. I was not quite so rude. I only thought it.

"We were looking at some excellent mahogany chairs, when we were in Walnut street this morning, at four dollars apiece. That would only be forty-eight dollars a dozen, and we paid twenty-five for these cane seats. It's a pity we hadn't bought mahogany chairs when we were about it. But these will do very well for the chamber."

When my wife gets a thing into her head, there is no getting it out. After she had said this, I saw the new chairs already in our parlors. This was in imagination; but the real vision came soon. A draft upon my deposits in the Savings' Bank for fifty dollars, furnished my wife with the means of gratifying her desire to have a set of cushioned chairs. Mrs. Henley pronounced them beautiful, but suggested that there was still something wanting to complete the effect. There must either be a sofa-table, or a centre-table, with a marble top.

"Mrs. Henley is very kind in her suggestions," I could not help saying, a little sarcastically. My wife did not like this at all, and met it with a warm defence of her agreeable neighbor. I was silenced. No more was said about a centre or sofa-table for a week or two. Then my wife, with the aid of her friend, discovered the very thing that was wanted, in a handsome sofa-table, with black Italian marble slab, the price of which, exceedingly moderate, was only twenty-two dollars. As there was a pair of them,

and the Henleys bought one, although they had a handsome centre-table already, I couldn't object very strongly, and I did not.

Carpets, chairs and sofa-table, were costly articles, and their purchase made quite a distinct impression upon the little fund I had saved. But, besides these marked impressions, there was a gradual wasting away of my cherished deposit. Mrs. Henley was a woman who always wanted something, and never was satisfied unless she were spending money. In the course of a year and a half, she had so filled my wife with her spirit, that our current expenses, instead of coming within eight hundred dollars, exceeded a thousand per annum, and my four hundred dollars were all drawn out of the Savings' Bank. I had cause to feel sober.

"This will never do," I would say to my wife. "We are living beyond our income."

"I am sure I try to be economical," she would answer. "I don't see how I could spend less. We live no better than other persons in our circumstances live. I am sure Mrs. Henley spends two dollars on herself where I spend one."

"We used to get along very comfortably on eight hundred dollars a year. But we have not only spent a thousand dollars a year for the last two years, but have drawn everything out of the Savings' Bank we had laid up."

"Yes, dear, but look how much furniture we have bought. These carpets, those chairs and tables, and that elegant rocking-chair; besides the dressing-bureau, wash-stand, and mahogany bedstead."

"True. But are we any happier than we were?" I replied. "To speak for myself, I can say that I am not."

"We shall not have them to buy again. They will last us our life-time," suggested my wife, by way of consolation.

"Yes, but my dear, we are living at an expence of at least eleven hundred dollars, and my salary, you are aware, is but a thousand."

My wife looked very serious.

"I don't know what we shall do," she said, in a desponding tone.

"If you don't, I must find out," was my mental reply.

When I left home I took the way direct to the store of my landlord.

"Mr. L——," said I, "have you another house a mile or two away from the one I now occupy?"

"Vacant, you mean?"

"Of course."

"Yes. I received the key this morning of a very excellent house up in Spring Garden District. But the rent is two hundred and fifty."

"Fifty dollars more than I now pay. No matter. That will do. Now, Mr. L——, I want you to write me a formal notification to leave your house within three days."

"Why so? That is a strange proceeding."

I gave him a history of the effect produced upon my finances by our very agreeable neighbors, and declared that if he did not do as I wished, I would be ruined.

My landlord laughed at me, but promised to do as I desired. You may judge of my wife's surprise when a peremptory notice to quit was received.

"He can't get you out until the end of the quarter," suggested Mr. Henley.

"I wouldn't go for him!" said Mrs. Henley, with strongly marked emphasis.

But I affected to be greatly indignant at the landlord's note, and said I wouldn't live in his house another week if he gave it to me rent free for a year. On the next day I took my wife out to see the new house in Spring Garden. She strongly objected to going so far away.

"So far away from where?" I asked.

This she was not able to answer very satisfactorily.

When, however, she saw the house, and found it to be so much larger, handsomer, and more convenient than the one we had left, she waived all objections, and we were snugly settled in it before a week had elapsed. The only thing that my wife regretted in the change, was the loss of her agreeable neighbor, Mrs. Henley. I need not express my feelings on that subject.

Soon we had matters and things going on in the old way, and I am now laying up from one to two hundred dollars a year, and shall continue to do so I hope, unless the Henleys take a fancy to move into our neighborhood, which Heaven forbid!

So much for our very agreeable neighbors. They were pleasant people certainly, but their acquaintance cost too much.

POOR JOHNNY.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

"Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven!"

ABOUT half an hour's ride from the thickly settled portions of New York, is one of the most beautiful little islands that you ever set eyes upon. Just where the banks of the East River are the most broken and picturesque on the main bottom shore, and the sunny slopes of Long Island are most verdant in their arcadian beauty, the river opens its bright waters, and Blackwell's Island rises, green, verdant, and beautiful from its azure bosom. Beautiful, even now, is that island; but it was more so, years ago, when its hollows were fragrant with wild roses, haunted with black-birds and thrushes; when its shores were hedged in with the snow-white dog-wood, wild cherry and maple trees, joined together with scarlet ivy and a thousand clinging vines, that even now hang along its shores, like torn banners left on a battle field. Then, the island must have seemed a mile's length of Paradise chopped into the waters—but now, alas, Blackwell's Island has other inhabitants than the singing birds, and the sweet wild blossoms. Its extremities are burdened, and crushed down, as it were, to the very water's edge, with an edifice of massive stone, while human crime and human misery are crowded together in masses appalling to reflect upon.

On one end of the island, naturally so quiet and beautiful, rises the rugged walls of the Penitentiary, flanked by out-houses, hospitals, and offices, every stone of which is eloquent of human degradation. Here, a thousand wretched beings, bowed with misery and branded with crime, are crowded together. All the day long, herds of these degraded beings may be seen in their coarse and faded uniform, burrowing in the earth, blasting and shaping the rocks that are to form new prison walls, and filling the sweet air with groans and curses which once thrilled only to the Summer-bird songs.

At the other extremity of the island stands the Insane Asylum, a beautiful pile, towering proudly over a scene of misery that is enough to make the heart humble with awe and sympathy. From its grated windows you may hear every sound, horrid or pathetic, in which the insane mind expresses its ravings. At one window is a wild face peering through the bars, and looking wistfully at the passer by with eyes full of entreaty, and the wan hand waving fainter and fainter as the wild gesture is unheeded; from another shrieks ring out upon the water, as the poor maniac calls for his mother to come out from the woods—a beautiful grove that rises afar off on the Long Island shore.

"Mother—mother, come, come, I have waited—I

have pleaded—I have prayed for you to come. Mother! mother!"

This is the daily cry of a poor German boy. The fisherman hears it as he glides by the walls of that gloomy mad-house, and lifts his oar with a sort of terror, as if his own freedom were a mockery to the poor creatures blocked in by those massive and iron-girt walls from the sweet sunny air—the passengers that float by in our palace steamboats sometimes hear a wild shout, rising even above the noise of the engine, and see an arm thrust wildly through the iron bars of the window where this boy is confined—and in the still night, that cry of "mother, mother, come," rings over the woods; and dies in plaintive murmurs amid the roar and turmoil of "Hell Gate."

Other sounds there are issuing from that dismal dwelling—curses that chill the blood—pleadings that might melt a heart of stone—wild, riotous laughter, and wit, often more keen and satirical than springs from the most brilliant intellect. Besides all this amount of living misery, every association, painful or horrid, seems crowded on this beautiful spot—there is a little mound scarcely a stone's throw from the water, and surmounted by a motley trimmed apple tree, that looks like some pretty hillock, left by the gardener as a pleasant object to greet the poor maniac as he gazes from the window of his cell. Quiet and verdant it seems, with the calm sunshine sleeping on it, and the shadow of the slender tree pencilled delicately on the sward, as if nothing less beautiful had ever touched its surface. Yet that is the gallows tree! Under its young boughs year after year, was the fatal timbers reared from which one human soul after another was rudely thrust into eternity. That soft grass, so bright and beautiful, has been trodden over and over by the executioner. Those young boughs have trembled to the death-agony of many a wretched convict. Legally murdered, amid the shouts, the sneers, the horror of his fellow men—and yet the scene from that tree is so beautiful, the blue expanse of the river sweep around one broad mirror of sunshine and water. The shores all around are indented into fairy promontories, and rise in the most beautiful slopes that ever gave birth to a world of wild flowers. Close by, the waters of "Hell Gate" toss up their foam, and sparkle in the sunshine, and in the purple distance sleeps many a scene of rural loveliness that is more than arcadian in its rural beauty. Yet with all this beauty slumbering around, there stood the gallows tree—there looms the Insane Asylum, and there the black Penitentiary is sequestered like some loathsome monster

upon the spot which was not many years since a perfect jungle of sweet brier and swamp roses.

Am I wrong then in saying that on this little slip of earth is kneaded together more of human wretchedness than can be found in the same space throughout the length and breadth of our land. The moment your foot touches the shore you feel oppressed with the crowd of feelings that seem inexplicable—pity, horror, and a painful blending of both crowd upon the heart with every breath you draw. Nothing but the air seems free; nothing but the blue sky above seems pure, as you walk from one scene of distress to another. You feel the more oppressed because human effort seems so powerless to alleviate the misery you witness. All that humanity can accomplish; all that sympathy can do to alleviate distress, is already extended by those who are entrusted to regulate the charities of a great city—but what can minister to a mind diseased? What can take away the deformity and the sting of guilt? Where lies the power to lift pauperism from the degradation that the hughty and evil spirit of man has flung around it? The very heart grows faint as it beats in this wilderness of woe, and finds no fitting answer to questions like these.

But there is still one remnant of beautiful nature left on Blackwell's Island—one spot where the flowers are yet left to bloom in the pure breath of Heaven—where the trees are yet rooted to the earth, and filled, as of old, with the music of Summer birds. On the very centre of the island is an old mansion house, formerly the residence of its proprietor before the paradise became city property. It is a rambling old building, with wings of unequal length, shaded with some magnificent old willows, and surrounded by shrubberies, pretty lawns, shaded with fine old trees; terraces, beautifully lifted from the water's edge; and gravel walks, with here and there a grape arbor flung over them, and bordered with some of the thickest and heaviest box to be found within ten miles around. A neglected and rude old place it is, but perhaps the more lovely for that. Neglect only seems to add to the wild luxuriance of every thing around, the hedges and rose thickets are tangled together. Great snow-ball trees,—trumpet vines, and honeysuckles seem to shoot out more vigorously from want of pruning, and the trees have become dressed in the majesty of their age.

You can stand in the old hall and see the river on either hand sparkling through the spreading branches—now and then a snow white sail glides by, and at sunset the water seems heaving up waves of gold wherever your eye is turned.

This is the Children's Hospital. In the low chambers, and the fine old fashioned rooms, from a hundred and fifty to two hundred children lie upon their little cots, in all the stages of suffering to which infancy is subject. Oh, it is a mournful sight,—those helpless little creatures, orphaned, or worse than orphaned, in the morning of life. Their wasted features wearing such looks of pain, and yet so pliant. God help them!

The physician in this hospital is a relative of my own, and many a heart aches as it given me to watch

the brightening of those little faces, as he or the good matron pass into the wards, ministering to their comfort; poor things, by a kind look and soothing word, where medicine might often less avail. Strange manifestations of character have I witnessed among those little creatures—fortitude, that might have shamed a warrior—patience, the most saint-like; and again, but why should I dwell upon the evil that sometimes exhibits itself, full grown, in the heart of an infant? But there was one little child, whose history, simple as it is, yet to me, full of touching interest, I am about to relate. There is no romance in it—nothing to excite, but still I think the reader will not turn away from what I have to tell of poor little Johnny, without a feeling of sympathy, a sigh, perhaps a tear. I shed more than one when they told me that his little coffin rested among the dead heaped together in Potter's Field.

We had gone up to spend an afternoon with my relatives, and were sitting out upon the piazza that runs along the front of the hospital, enjoying the delicious fragrance that came up from the shrubberies, and speaking, now and then, a word to a group of little crippled children that were lying around the steps, when the commissioners' boat, from the Alms House, at Bellevue, came in sight, with two or three of the young physicians of that institution on board. They landed, and came through the grounds, one of them bearing a mop of red flannel and grey fustian in his arms, amid which a pale hand falling over the doctor's shoulder, and a thin little face, resting upon his bosom, was just discernible. As the group passed us and entered the hall, the child's head was fully lifted, and he turned upon us a face so meek, and yet beaming with vivid intelligence, that it made the heart thrill painfully to look on him.

His dress was of the coarsest kind, neglected, and even squalid. A red flannel under garment, which had belonged to some full grown man, was huddled about him in coarse folds, and fastened to his thin waist by a nether garment, also much too large—but the legs were rolled up in a soiled mop, through which his thin ankles and torn shoes protruded, and the long red sleeves were folded back to the shoulder over his long and deathly white arms. I had often seen sick children carried into the hospital before, and never without a thrill of pain, but there was something about this child so singular, that I could not cast him from my mind—his face had all the intelligence of an old man's, worn out in struggle with the evils of life. Yet there was something saint-like and holy in the large eyes, that the heart could feel, though the pen would altogether fail in conveying an idea of it.

After a time, I went up to see the little stranger. He had been put in a bath, and his rags displaced by clean and wholesome garments. The thin, golden hair was combed back from his forehead, and altogether, he had a look of cleanliness and comfort that had something cheering in it. He seemed to feel the genial effect of this change, for his large eyes had brightened somewhat, and on his hollow cheek lay a faint tinge of red. The child was not handsome, perhaps had never been so in health—but the heart

yearned toward him with a feeling holier a thousand times than infantine beauty could excite.

I sat down by the child, who had seated himself on a stool, near the foot of his cot, and taking his little hand, asked if he were ill.

"A little," he said, in a voice that corresponded with his meek face.

"What is the matter—have you been ill long?"

"Yes, a little ill—nothing very bad though—my back is burned a good deal, but it will be well soon, now that I am here, and everybody so kind."

He turned his eyes from the comfortable and clean cot to my face, and then dropped them to his hands that were clasped and resting on his knees.

"What is your name?"

"John—but my mother and aunty call me Johnny."

"Then you have a mother?"

"Yes!"

His eyes drooped down, and his fallen voice was still more faint. I saw that there was something wrong; some thought at the child's heart which it would pain him to drag forth. I would not question him further, but proceed to say a few encouraging words to him, and was about to leave the room, but the boy turned his eyes upon me as if he had something to say, so I went back.

"Is there anything I can do for you, Johnny. I am going home now, but shall come up again soon—shall I bring you some oranges, or apples, or cake?"

He lay still, and kept his eyes down, and I saw, that unlike any child I had seen there before, he did not seem elated with the offer of these dainties—he hesitated; moved on his stool; said he thanked me very much indeed, but did I live in New York?

"Yes!"

"Well, then, if it would not be too much trouble—if I would just as lief do it as to give him the apples—would I go and see his mother, and tell her how comfortable he was, and that he wanted to see her very much—and aunty, too, he would like to see them both—would I go?—his aunty had brought him to Bellevue four days ago, but she might not have heard about his coming up here, and so it would be a long time before they found him, would I be so kind?"

"Would I be so kind?" had that child asked me to walk fifty miles with that voice, and those pleading eyes, I could not have denied him. So taking his mother's address I gave the promise.

"Tell her that I want very much to see her by Wednesday—if you please, ma'am, I don't feel as if I could wait longer than Wednesday!"

"She will come—I will tell her all, and perhaps come with her," I said, fully resolved that the sick child should have his wish.

Well, I returned home with my thoughts full of this pauper child—this little sick child with his lips all parched, and his eyes kindled with a death glow, who could ask a sight of his mother instead of the grateful fruit that even healthy children will sacrifice so much for! His mother, too!—I was curious to see the mother of this singular child, surely she must be something superior—an intelligent and feeble woman broken down by misfortune, and at last compelled to separate from her off-spring. These thoughts were

in my mind the last thing as I went to sleep that night.

It wanted two days of Wednesday, and I went in search of Johnny's mother. I had the address in one of those streets where misery pays a high price for the privilege of existing, and after finding my way up two flights of dirty stairs to the attic, I found a passage through sundry wood-tubs, half full of dirty water, two or three unwashed kettles and a broken stove that furnished the outer garret—and knocked at a rickety door, through which the sound of a low, faggy sort of voice came, as if some one were muttering to himself within. The voice was lifted in answer to my knock, and I entered a little hole of a room containing a pile of rags in one corner, a broken table, on which was a bottle, a tea-cup and some fragments of "cold victuals," on a dilapidated old chest sat a bloated, slip-shod woman, seemingly with no garment on but a ragged gown and more than half intoxicated, though it was quite early in the morning. A little boy of three years old, perhaps, sat near the fire-place almost without clothes, and playing with some dirty shavings that littered the hearth.

Could this woman be the mother of little Johnny—that meek and sweet faced child? I could hardly ask the question—yet so it was! When I told her of the child, and gave his simple message, she got up from the chest and began curtsying to the ground over and over again, mumbling out her thanks that the "likes of me" should come to see her, and adding a series of disgusting and half intelligible excuses for the state of her room and dress.

To my inquiries if she would go to see her sick child on the following Wednesday, she gave me to understand that she thought a great deal of Johnny—that she would like to see him of all things, only she had no money to pay for a ride in the stage, and no time to wash her dress; then she fell to weeping, and I left her in a fit of maudlin lamentations over the evils of her fate, which terminated as I went out in a burst of those vulgar blessings that are so revolting in the mouths of the vile—all because I had promised to pay her stage fare, and supply her with a clean dress if she would promise to be in condition to go and see her child on Wednesday.

And this was the mother of little Johnny! this woman—so vile, so utterly debased! Her inebriate kisses had warmed his infancy. In her loathsome bosom that pale child had slept. I went home heart sick and shocked beyond measure; poor little Johnny—he had now become more than ever an object of compassion. What a heart he must have thus to pine for the sight of a mother like that! I could now understand the blush that lay on that poor cheek, and the faltering of his voice when she was mentioned. He was ashamed of the drunken mother that he loved so much.

On Wednesday I sent early, to know if the woman was ready to visit her dying child. She was so intoxicated that it was impossible to obtain a definite answer from her.

I went up to the hospital alone. Johnny was sitting out by the piazza, crouched all in a heap, with the sunshine falling brightly around him; his fine eyes

lighted up when he saw me, and his face beamed with the most beautiful smile I ever saw; he looked eagerly down the walk as if expecting some one to follow me.

"She could not come, my child," I said, answering the look: "your mother was not well!"

He fixed those large, earnest eyes on me for a moment. Then they drooped to the earth, and I could see tears swelling under the lids.

"She will come very soon though," I said, filled with pity for his disappointment, and perpetrating an harmless fraud, I gave him a couple of oranges as if from her. His face brightened. He took the oranges, held them a few minutes, and then crept round a wing of the building where a couple of little hunch-backed cripples were standing, and gave one to each.

"I don't care so very much for oranges," he said, coming back with a smile on his lips, and crouching down on the turf again; "and no one ever brings them anything. They are orphans, you know."

"Doctor," said Johnny, that day, as my brother was passing through the ward, "have you some paper and a pen and ink, I should like very much to write a letter to my mother." This was a singular request from a child of eight years old, and it quite startled the doctor—but he ordered the writing materials for the boy, and offered to have a table sent, but he drew a stool up to his cot, and turning a tin pan bottom up on the bed, began his letter on that.

It was a touching epistle, well written, and pathetic in its manifestation of earnest affection. He spoke of his comforts, of the care and kindness extended to him, and begged her to come very soon. He should watch for her now every day—she need not wait till she had money to buy something for him, he did not care for that, all he wanted was to see her. During the whole week that woman was never sober enough to read or understand the purport of this pleading letter.

Johnny was in a consumption. The doctor told me this on my next visit; and, as the burn on his neck healed, the hectic fever and racking cough grew worse. For a little time, while the Autumn sunshine was warm and golden, the poor little fellow might be found in the open air with his shadowy limbs gathered under him, and that sad, patient smile forever on his lips. He never complained, and yet never spoke of getting well. Everything given him was received with thankfulness; every little attention acknowledged with a smile so sweet, and patient enough to give a heart-ache to the most hardened. I never saw him that he did not ask for his mother.

"I have waited," he said, after weeks had gone by, and he was growing more feeble every day: "I have waited so long, expecting her every day, that sometimes I seem to get discouraged. Perhaps she is staying away because she has no money to buy things for me," he would say, "but she needn't wait for that. I don't care much for nice things! Besides, I haven't breath to eat them. Tell her this—tell her all I want in the wide world is to see her and aunty and Joseph."

I did tell her! Again and again I went to that squalid garret. I informed the woman that her child was dying, that a few weeks must end his life. I

urged, entreated, persuaded—but always to a brain so clouded with drink that it seemed incapable of remembering for ten minutes anything I might say. She promised to be ready each time, but never kept her promise, or seemed to remember that she had made one. At length, when the boy was so feeble that he was obliged to be brought from the wards in the arms of his nurse, and was still pleading for a sight of his wretched parent; I resolved to make one more effort. So very early in the morning I sent the woman word not to go out, for at ten I should call for her, with a clean dress which she was to wear on a visit to her child.

I went at ten: but scarcely reached the garret when the sound of voices joining in a riotous song met my ear. Through the chinks of the door, and over the litter of pails, brooms and kettles came the unseemly sound; and most hateful of all was the thickened tones of that mother rising coarse and loud above the others. I opened the door, and there around a bottle of some kind of spirits, a tin dipper, two teacups and a broken sugar-bowl, sat three women. All of them were more or less inebriated, and in the full tide of their horrible enjoyment. The song was hushed as I entered. The woman that I came to seek arose—her face flushed, her eyes heavy, and staggered toward me.

I shrank from the wretch with loathing, and forgetting the absurdity of resentment with a creature so lost—spoke severely to her.

"Why! I am ready. I have been at home waiting all the time. I'm ready! give me the dress," she said, holding herself up by the table.

"You are in no situation to visit a dying child," I said. "You have been drinking."

"Is it me that has been drinking?" cried the wretch, making an effort to conceal the bottle under the ragged folds of her dress. "Me, indeed; there is sister can tell you that not a blessed drop has passed my lips this morning—drinking indeed!"

"She is in no condition to go," said the woman to whom this appeal was made, and who seemed a few degrees more respectable than herself. "But if you will pay the stage fare I would go and see the poor, dear child."

The woman shed a few tears that seemed to be natural: and so transferring the clean dress, and a more tidy bonnet and shawl to her person, I prepared to take away the woman whom Johnny called "aunty," instead of his degraded mother.

All this time the little boy had been crying piteously in a corner of the room, protesting that some one was going to take his mother to prison, and looking the very picture of infantile misery. This was Johnny's brother; so after procuring some decent clothes, in which the little fellow really looked very well—and arming him with a big orange and a large apple—the aunt and brother were fairly started for Blackwell's Island.

When I reached the hospital, there was little Johnny sitting on the steps, where the pleasant Autumn sun was shining—nestled close to his aunt and sheltered by her shawl. His eyes were bright as diamonds, and the smile that beamed over his wan face like that of an angel. Still you could see that he was on the very

brink of the grave; his breath came with a painful quiver at every word; and his pale lips were even now tinged with the hue of death. His head was upon his aunt's lap: and at his feet sat the little brother, holding the orange in his hands, and looking so cheerful and healthy. The contrast was enough to thrill the hardest heart with pain.

I sat down behind the group and listened to what passed, for Johnny was talking, and his sweet, feeble voice fell like a plaintive lute-strain on my spirit.

"Aunty—dear aunty," he was saying, "tell her how much I think of her: how I dream of her at night, and watch for her all the day long. Tell her this, will you, aunty?—but let her be clean like you, and—and—" here his voice sank to a whisper—"oh, beg her not to drink anything for that one day. I think that I should die that minute if she came here among all these sick children. You know how, aunty—this—this is one reason why I won't to see her so much. If she could only know how short of breath I am—and—how the fever burns me at night—if she could feel my hot hands, and know as well as I do

what is coming next. I am sure—oh, quite sure that she would never drink again. I must see her—oh, aunty, aunty, dear—I must, must see her. She did not drink so when father went to Heaven; and if I should go there, oh, aunty, I could not tell him about her! as she is now!"

The child lifted his head as he uttered these words, a faint color rose in one cheek, and the other was white as marble. In my life I never saw eyes so vividly bright, they absolutely burned with holy inspiration. I arose and went away, the scene had become too painful.

The next time I saw the child he was lying on his little cot gasping for breath, and almost speechless. Yet the poor fellow smiled, and thanking me, said—"that he did not suffer so very much." He cast a wishful look through the door as I came in, which I could understand too well. This was the last time poor Johnny ever asked for his mother. When I inquired for him the next time, the doctor pointed to his empty cot, and his eyes were wet as well as mine.

THE FRIGHT; OR, "APPEARANCES ARE DECEITFUL."

BY FANNIE OF FARLEIGH.

"ELLEN, what a fright that Miss Blayne is! How long before she goes home?"

"I hope, brother, she will remain long enough to alter your opinion of her pleasant face."

"Pleasant face, indeed! Eyes, small and greyish; a mountain of nose; ears like the wings of a bat; unlimited mouth; and chin, decorated with a hair mole; and then her figure! ungraceful and awkward, and——"

"Nay, nay; now listen to my description: Eyes, small 'tis true, but piercing and intellectual in their expression; nose, aquiline, and according to Lavater, denoting genius; ears, too large for beauty, but which never listen to calumny; and that unlimited mouth, Harry, containing a tongue, which never uttered a slander."

"Do praise that mole, Ellen, and say the figure of your friend is perfection: I am quite prepared to hear you announce, a beautiful foot, and dimpled hand."

"Both of which, she has; one day, perchance you will sue for the latter."

"Whew! but in sober earnest, dear Nell, what did induce you to become so desperately intimate with her?"

"Because, in my eyes, she is altogether lovely."

"Humph! I know I shall hate her, dressed so countryfied too; I do wish you had never met her, Ellen."

"And I do wish you would learn that I am not to be controlled in my likes, or dislikes, by the whims of a spoiled brother," said Ellen, playfully.

"Well, have your own way, but rest assured, I shall not exhibit myself in public with such a fright."

Just at this moment the fright opened the door, and entered the room where Harry and his sister sat, and from the slight blush which mantled her cheeks, it was feared she had heard the last sentence. But she smiled, in spite of her large mouth, when Ellen introduced her to him, for she thought within herself, she must have looked frightful enough, the previous evening, to justify his opinion; as the stage in which she came from Glenmore, had been overturned, and broken her bonnet, though not her bones; the accident, also, having been the means of covering her with dust and mud. Harry had, unfortunately for a first impression, seen her from an upper window, at which he had been standing, when the coach arrived, and after his sister's too flattering description of Miss Blayne, his disappointment was not to be wondered at. Breakfast over, let us follow Miss Blayne to her chamber, and peep over her shoulder while she pens an epistle to her cousin, Mary Hansell.

"I have arrived here at last, dear Mary, after various accidents by the way. We had but few passengers: an elderly gentleman, and a lady still older, were the only occupants of the coach for a time, the latter serving to amuse me considerably, by the anxiety she expressed, to regain a mysterious bundle she had left behind, and which we discovered was her medicine chest—she talked on, all the way, lamenting her loss, sometimes to herself, sometimes to us—but her loquacity became at last rather annoying. At the first stopping place, we took in a live dandy, the most insufferable specimen of his class I ever beheld, and his mode of eyeing me, reminded me very much of the style of *Sim Tappertit's*, glances towards *Dolly Varden*; but finding I was a green country girl, resembling '*Miggs*,' rather than the aforesaid *Dolly*, he relapsed into the contemplation of his own personal decorations. It was nearly dark, and excessively dismal, I thought, to be shut up in a coach, with a fat old man, a wheezy, and grumbling old woman, and a whiskered and fierce looking dandy. I tried to remember other forlorn ones, and pictured the entrance into great cities, of various damsels, as set forth in romances, but it was poor consolation, for all I could bring to mind, was connected in some way or other, with disaster. I had read of similar scenes, but either the dandy had run off with the lone maiden, or the old woman had turned out to be her grandmother (which Heaven forbid in this instance,) or the elderly gentleman had, in some inexplicable manner, become sufficiently interested in her, to tell her his history, which somehow or other, brought out the fact, that she was anybody's child but her own parents, and had been stolen away by gipsies in her infancy. The upshot of the matter generally, being noble parentage, and a splendid estate. All this, and more, passed through my mind, while we drove on, and entered a long narrow street, the old lady assuring us there had been more coaches upset here than anywhere else in the whole world, though for her part, she was prepared to die at any moment, that was, as soon as she got her bundle back, which *she never should*. In the midst of this harangue, tilt, went the stage over, into a muddy rut, and though fortunately escaping with unbroken bones, and but few bruises, we looked rather the worse for our adventure. I took a cab, and before long was standing, bag and baggage, in the vestibule of my city friends. Did I quake and tremble all over? did I blush and stammer? when the ebony gentleman, with his gaiters and brass buttons, asked me, 'if I was sure I had got to the right place?' Not at all, cousin mine; I moved toward the parlor

poor, which just at the moment opened, and dear Ellen Grey ran out to receive me. Hastily explaining our mishap, I entreated to be shown to my chamber, and though still twilight, I concluded to remain, and not make my appearance till morning, especially when catching a view of myself in the glass, I perceived, besides my bonnet being broken, there was a rent in my dress, and every article of my apparel variegated with mud. And now for this morning; to give you an idea of Ellen's kindness is impossible, but shall I confess it?—I fear I am not to the rest of the family a welcome guest, especially to a haughty and rather impertinent looking brother, whom I overheard quite accidentally, affirming his determination, never to exhibit himself in public with such a fright. I know I am homely, and therefore forgave him, remembering he did not intend I should hear his private resolves regarding myself. During our morning meal he sat at the same side of the table with me, but unfortunately for himself, opposite a mirror, looking into which, I could see him executing various grimaces, expressive of dislike, and distorting his countenance into all the ludicrous expressions possible, by way of giving a pictorial illustration of a fright, I suppose, for that I was the object aimed at, I knew full well. I felt rather unpleasantly, of course, but again recollecting that he was not aware of my seeing him, I took no notice of it, and I believe somewhat astonished him, by appearing entirely unawed by his presence—that he is a spoiled and saucy youth, and that no one but Ellen is aware of it, I can readily perceive; nevertheless, he appears to have something like a heart, and I hope to convince him, that a fright may have feelings as well as a beauty. Mr. and Mrs. Grey are what you would call examples of negative goodness, they are both polite, but betray little interest in the strange friend of their daughter—and I fancy if Ellen had not been accustomed to having her own way, your orphan cousin would still have been lingering at Glenmore. I have not yet determined on the length of my stay; you are aware my invitation is for six months, whether you see me before that time, will depend upon circumstances. Miss Murry, a friend of Ellen's, has included me, in an invitation to her party next week, which I have accepted, though I know not what Harry Grey will think of exhibiting himself with me, when he sees I cannot afford to dress stylishly."

Stand no longer there, gentle reader, a spy upon our homely little maiden, but let the wheels of time go noiselessly by, till a week shall have passed, and then, under the duenna-ship of one privileged to enter, join the charmed circle of bright young faces, who have gathered to-night to share in the festive enjoyments, occasioned by their schoolmate's acknowledged entrance into the world as a woman; for Miss Murry is just eighteen, and long has this period been looked forward to as an epoch in her life. Just eighteen; the golden age of a maidenhood, the happiest time of life—while the flowers are in their fragrance, and the morning dew is as yet unexhaled upon them. Who that has been just eighteen, does not look longingly back upon the time, when shutting forever the Eden gates of her girlhood, she stood without them, a

woman? Who that is to be just eighteen, ever thinks that the crippled hand of care will be laid upon her, or that the thorns, now scarcely seen or heeded, will grow upon her pathway, and pierce the foot, dancing along so joyously? But let us not stop to meditate—for there, under the chandelier, is Miss Blayne; and Harry Wetmore enquires of his friend, Frank Darnell, "who that excessively homely girl is?"

"I know not, Harry," he answers, "but her conversation is quite interesting, and she creates admiration in spite of her unattractive exterior; she has quite captivated old Mr. Weatherly I see. Let us obtain an introduction."

"Not I: you are welcome to become better acquainted with her charms, but here comes beautiful Delia Heyward, and I prefer beauty with twenty thousand, to ugliness with forty, though I doubt whether the interesting young lady possesses a shilling."

Now it so happened, that Miss Blayne overheard the whole discourse, and not being anxious for an introduction to either of the gentlemen, moved to an ottoman, at a little distance, and thus found herself near the beauty, who was surrounded by a crowd of admirers, all eager in their devotions. She *was* a beauty, but a soulless one; statue-like, and inexpressive she stood, as though expecting admiration.

"I saw you at the concert, a few evenings since," said Harry Wetmore, "how were you pleased, Miss Delia?"

"Oh! delighted, of course; but if I may be so bold, who was the lady with you, whose hair was arranged so beautifully? I was quite absorbed in the contemplation of her head, during the performance of the oratorio—her whole air was decidedly tannish—who was she? Mr. Wetmore."

"A cousin of mine, from Virginia," he replied,—"but she requires ornament to set off her attractions, with which none can dispense as well as yourself," he remarked, seeing the lady wore no jewelry.

Absorbed in the contemplation of a head dress, while every heart was thrilled with the very soul of harmony! thought Miss Blayne. *Can* she be so beautiful, yet unmindful of that rarer beauty, which quickens, and spiritualizes the whole nature? But no: I mistake her, absorbed, was the wrong word, she heard and observed, perhaps, at the same time.

"You admired my cousin's glossy hair, then?"

"Yes, even more than the music," she answered, with a light laugh.

If Miss Blayne was homely, her countenance was expressive, and Mr. Weatherly, (in whom she had discovered the elderly gentleman of the stage coach,) coming up at the moment, said, abruptly—

"You think her a heartless piece of fashionable nonentity," inclining his head towards Delia.

"Nay—judge me not thus—I have not known her long enough to form an opinion."

"But you *have* formed it, nevertheless."

"Why do you think so, Mr. Weatherly?"

"Perhaps it was a mere guess; perhaps the expression of your countenance indicated as much."

"Then I will still leave you the privilege of guessing my thoughts; but pray do not misinterpret the

expression of her face. Delia is very lovely looking, and so fair a complexion should contain a jewel."

"So it should, but 'appearances are deceitful!'"

"Mr. Weatherly, we want you as umpire," said a young girl, calling him to her, "for we are tossing to and fro, an apple of discord, come and decide for us," and again Miss Blayne was left for a few minutes alone.

"Go, Harry," said Ellen Grey, seeing her thus, "and ask Miss Blayne to dance."

"Dance with a fright! never——"

"But it is your place as a gentleman, to bestow some attention upon our guest."

"If I must, the sooner over the better," said he, and approaching Miss Blayne, he requested the pleasure of dancing with her. She peremptorily, but politely declined. Harry was surprised, but said nothing to induce her to alter her determination, and as soon as he could find opportunity, left her.

As the night wore on, Miss Blayne made many pleasant acquaintances, all of whom forgot her face was homely, and her figure dumpy, under the influence of her lively conversation and agreeable manners. Just before leaving, Mr. Weatherly came up, and begged permission to call on Miss Blayne, which was readily granted. And much bantering ensued from Ellen during their ride home on her conquest of the rich old bachelor.

"Well, my dear brother," said Ellen, the next day, "the fright was quite admired, notwithstanding your dread of an exhibition with her."

"Admired! yes, if trying to insinuate herself into the good graces of rich Mr. Weatherly was being admired, she was—Delia Heyward asked me if she expected to be a legatee."

"Delia Heyward! a vain, frivolous girl, who has nothing to recommend her but her beauty."

"You forget her twenty thousand dollars."

"Harry, is it possible you admire that girl more than my unobtrusive friend?"

"Yes—and now do not bore me about your friend whom I wish you had never seen. I will try to be civil to her while she stays—but that is all."

"Civil to her! I am really angry at you for your unkind remarks, but you know not how incapable she is of a mean action, or you would not have thought of her trying to insinuate herself into the good graces of Mr. Weatherly—*N'importe*!"

"A change will yet come over the spirit of your dreams."

A year had rolled by since Miss Blayne had been a guest of Ellen Grey's; and she was again at Glenmore making glad the hearts of those around her, for her goodness and piety of character made her every where a favorite.

"A letter for you, Ellen," said Harry Grey, handing one to his sister, while a peculiar expression stole over his fine features.

"Oh! from that fright, Miss Blayne, I see," replied Ellen, laying it coolly down, and going on with her sewing.

"Ellen, pray be generous, and let me share the contents."

"Eyes small and greyish," began Ellen.

"Spare me."

"A mountain of nose."

"Do spare me, sister."

"Ears like——" But Harry had placed his hand over her lips, exclaiming—

"For Heaven's sake, torment me no longer, Ellen, you know how entirely I have repented of my folly in judging from appearances; how I was deceived even in appearances, for each one of her features entered into a conspiracy against me, and I verily believe became beautiful in revenge for my ungallant aspersions of them."

"Ah! Love beautifies all things; but since you have made me your confidant, since during the two last months of my friends' stay you treated her with such unparalleled devotion, urged on in the first place by jealousy of old Mr. Weatherly, and hatred of young Mr. Darnell——"

"Stop there, sister—or I shall accuse you of bewitching Darnell, and stealing his affections from your friend; but go on—read, and I will spare your blushes."

"Provokingly short," said Ellen, as she broke the seal, and read—

"DEAR ELLEN—The Summer has brought us so much treasure in the way of flowers, fresh, bright and beautiful, that you and Henry must come to Glenmore and help us enjoy them. My uncle and aunt send pressing invitations, and I shall look for you without fail on Saturday next. Come, the flowers shall welcome you with sweetness, the birds with song, the streams with dancing, and the human hearts at Glenmore with the warmest of welcome."

"I have a thousand things to talk about, but shall not make my letter the vehicle of their utterance since you will be with me so soon. Dear old Mr. Weatherly has promised us a visit this Summer; you recollect how intimate I became with him during my stay in the city, but you never knew the foundation of that intimacy was the fact of his having been in early life a declared lover of my mother's. There were doubts and misunderstandings, and they parted; she loved again—but he never. Do you wonder that I feel in him the interest of a near and dear friend?"

"How frequently I look back to the happy days spent with you, and recall the kindnesses bestowed upon me, and you may imagine it is with feelings of the greatest delight I hail the opportunity of returning them in a measure; though I never can fully, since we are rather isolated here, and there are no Mr. Weatherly's to whom I can introduce you, no operas, no balls. Nothing in short but lovely nature, and I am partial enough to believe she bears acquaintance."

"Hang Mr. Weatherly!" was Harry's exclamation, when she finished—"can she be simple enough to marry him? She acknowledges her attachment without reserve."

Ellen laid down her work, and laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks at the ludicrous idea: and Harry found her mirth so contagious, that, spite of himself, he joined in it, and they had scarcely ceased when Mr. Grey entered the room.

"What now, children?" said he.

"A consent to go to Glenmore at once, and forbid the banes between John Horace Weatherly and my friend, Miss Blayne."

"Surely, Ellen—you are not in earnest, Weatherly is two years older than myself: why, Harry, my boy, I was in hopes you would win the lovely orphan who gained all hearts."

"He is going to try at all events, and in earnest, pa; we are off to Glenmore on Saturday if you do not veto the measure," and she placed Miss Blayne's letter in his hand.

"Go, in welcome," said he, after reading it, "but be sure and bring her back with you."

It was on one of June's loveliest days that Harry and his sister started for Glenmore, and a more impatiently than his never beat. He had become so imperceptibly interested in Miss Blayne that he knew not how entirely his happiness depended on her till they parted; and now he would not have lost the hope of calling her his for worlds. He could not trace his affections for her to any particular period; but he knew that unconsciously as he had treated her at first, she had never returned ought but kindness: and when, morning, noon, and evening, he saw her always cheerful, always endeavoring to render others happy, forgetful of self; when that face he had pronounced so very homely changed its expression with every passing emotion; he began to think, after all, she was a pleasant creature, and he liked a face that was not always the same. He became, thereupon, more than civil, even polite to his sister's friend; but when he found she was neither affected by his coldness, or overawed by his condescension, he felt quite anxious to establish himself in her good graces, and was as devoted as before he had been indifferent. But to Miss Blayne this alteration in his manner made not the slightest difference. She laughed on, chatted agreeably with all passing visitors, and endured with calm dignity the impertinent rudeness of Delia Heyward's remark applied to herself, that "distance lent enchantment to the view." She made the home of Mr. Grey a scene of entertainment in her own quiet way, without seeming to perceive she was the entertainer and they the listeners. Every one who knew her loved her, because she was unselfish; appreciated her because she was an agreeable companion: while those judged from appearances thought her a dumpy little fright. Notwithstanding Harry Grey's interest in her, it must be confessed he had a vague idea he was conferring an honor, by his intention of proposing himself and his expectations to a lone orphan girl. But there was Mr. Weatherly—had he the same intention? He tormented himself not a little by picturing his wealthy rival taking the precedence of him, and he was not sure that Miss Blayne could resist the all omnipotent dollars and cents.

Sooner than he anticipated, however, an opportunity occurred favorable to his wooing. They had been walking alone together, a few evenings after his arrival, and an awkward silence had succeeded the desultory chat with which they had beguiled the way—when Harry, with his impulsive abruptness, said so suddenly as almost to startle his companion—

"Do you love me?"

She looked up in surprise; but seeing his eyes intently fixed upon her as though awaiting an answer, replied quietly—

"No!"

"Do you love Mr. Weatherly?"

"Yes!"

"And you will marry him?"

"Will I?"

"Say you will not. He loves you."

"I hope he does, sir. But we are at the door—good evening," and Miss Blayne vanished.

Strange and inexplicable were the feelings of Harry Grey as he strode rapidly up and down the lawn.

"Love him?" he muttered, "a white haired old man! Marry him! yes, for sordid gold—fool that I was—I saw it all. Yes, she is ugly, and mean, and—"

"A fright!" said Miss Blayne, coming softly behind him: "I know it," she continued, after an agitating pause, laying her hand on his arm, "I know it, Harry Grey, I am beautiful neither in face nor figure; but He who created us all has formed me thus for His own wise purpose, and I now returned to tell you in justice to Mr. Weatherly and to myself, that though I love him deeply, devotedly, it is as a daughter would a father, and I should love him were he a penniless old man. He was once attached to my mother," she said, softly, looking down.

Harry felt at this moment that Miss Blayne's feelings were wounded, nay, it flashed upon him at once that he had not wooed as he should have done to win. His haughtiness—his pride was gone; he saw before him not the homely maiden he had *condescended* to love, but the gentle, unselfish being whose guileless heart was cast in a mould all might look upon and say how beautiful. Once more, therefore, he proffered his love.

"Can you love me, Miss Blayne? Will you give me time to prove the depth of that tenderness which gushes from my heart for you. It may be among the possibilities that you can, at some future period, appreciate my unworthy self, sufficiently to return the deep and unchanging love I feel for you." He took her hand, but she was silent. "Tell me, may I hope?"

"I have said I loved you not."

"But time may change you."

"Never—I shall always be—a fright!" and here little Miss Blayne puckered her face into so roguish an expression, that simultaneously they burst into a laugh.

"At least say you do not hate me—permit me to visit you for one year, and let me hope I can, during that time, render myself worthy of your love."

"And you will acquit me of all blame if, at the expiration of that period, we are no more than friends?"

"Most assuredly."

Another year—and Ellen Grey sat reading the last note she should receive from Miss Blayne; for in a few days she was to become the wife of her brother Henry. "No plummet line," she wrote, "could sound the depths of my affection for your brother, my Harry at last."

"My own! my beautiful!" whispered Harry, as on the bridal morn Miss Blayne stood before him, attired with elegant simplicity.

Marvel not ye weeping wedding goers that Miss Blayne actually laughed heartily as repeating the word "beautiful," she said, while the spirit of mis-

chief danced all over her face. "But rest assured I shall not exhibit myself in public with such a fright!"

Harry blushed—but smiled also as circling her waist with his arm, he replied—"ah, dearest, I have long since learned that 'appearances are deceitful.'"

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THE TROTH PLIGHT.

A STORY OF LEE'S LEGION

BY CHARLES J. PETERSON.

[Entered, according to the Act of Congress, in the year 1847, by Charles J. Peterson, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.]

CHAPTER I.

"He pauses—from the patriarch's brow
There beams more lofty grandeur now;
His reverend form, his aged hand,
Assume a gesture of command."—MRS. HEMANS.

"HARK!"

The speaker was an old man, whose long silvery locks shaded a countenance full of benignity. Placing his hand on the shoulder of his only child, a daughter of seventeen, who had been reading aloud to her parents, he remained in the attitude of one listening intently.

The period when our narrative begins was a few months after the battle of Camden, and toward the close of 1780. By the defeat of Gates, South Carolina, as is well known, fell a prey to Cornwallis; and the tories, whose rapine had been heretofore checked by the whigs, now rose to the ascendant, and maintained it with savage ferocity. Especially were they to be dreaded in the wild and unsettled district where Mr. Arden resided. Houses were plundered; plantations given to the flames; slaves carried off; fathers of families murdered; and not infrequently wives and daughters treated with the last indignity by these brutal and lawless men. No wonder, therefore, that Mr. Arden trembled for the fair and gently nurtured child beside him, when, between the intonations of her voice, he fancied he heard the sound of numerous footsteps approaching.

And no one could have seen Alice Arden then without partaking her father's feelings; for her beauty was of that gentle yet heroic kind which enlists the sympathies at once. Of a complexion delicately fair, and a face that beamed with intelligence and feeling, Alice was very beautiful. She had been sought by many a suitor, though hitherto without success; for her heart was wrapped up in her parents. To them she devoted every thought. For them she sang, for them she sketched, for them she practised her embroidery; because she knew they were proud of her accomplishments, rare in that day. For them too on Sunday evenings she read aloud from the Bible, a holy task in which she had been interrupted by her father's exclamation.

"Hark!" he said again, raising his finger.

For a moment there was death-like silence in the room, and then there came to the ear, loud and distinct, the hurried tramp of men.

"Are the doors fastened?—are the windows barred?" he cried, springing to his feet.

Alice, pale with alarm, rose also, answering in the affirmative.

"It is well," he said, walking to the door to examine. "In these perilous times, we know not who may be abroad. Pray God these may not be tories, though I hear they are rising in the district. Let us barricade the door to be prepared for the worst."

With some difficulty the massive dining-table was dragged, rather than lifted to the required position, where it formed a sort of rude barricade. By this time the sound of footsteps was close at hand. Alice stood a little behind her father, half supporting her other parent, who trembled violently. The daughter was more resolved, for she inherited something of her sire's spirit, but still, not a shadow of color remained in her face. There was a moment's breathless suspense, and then came a loud knock on the door, as if with some heavy instrument, like the butt end of a musket.

"Who's there?" asked Mr. Arden.

"A friend," was the reply.

"And who is a friend?"

"Open and see," answered the speaker, rapping impatiently with his musket against the panel.

"There is something I should know in that voice," retorted Mr. Arden, in a loud, firm tone. "But as these are wild times, I must be excused for not opening until I know further of my visitors."

There was now a low muttering on the outside, which continued for more than a minute. Several voices could be distinguished, and some difference of opinion apparently existed as to what should be done next. At last, the first speaker resumed aloud—

"Open, Mr. Arden," he said, "or it will be the worse for you. We know you to be a whig, and if you would escape harsh usage, you had better let us in without further parley."

"And I know *you* now, James Hardy, for your voice has betrayed you," replied the old man, in a resolute tone. "Go your way, and let me and mine alone; for enter here, you shall not—unless over my corpse."

What made Alice shudder and cling suddenly to her mother as these words were pronounced? Why did that parent fling her arms convulsively around her child and burst into a passion of tears? And why was it that the sire, even while he thus boldly spoke, glanced a moment at his child, with a look of unutterable anguish, gone indeed in an instant like the lightning's flash, but like it for that one instant

fullly distinct? It was because each and all too well knew now the purpose of this visit. Hardy was the reputed leader of a band of Tories, or regulators, as they called themselves; and had once been indignantly rejected by Alice, to whose fair hand he had presumed to aspire. This had been during the period of the whig ascendancy. He had then been heard to swear that, if ever the tables turned in war, he would make the Ardens rue their haughtiness. Too many atrocious acts had already occurred, in the short interval since the subjugation of South Carolina, to leave any doubt as to his present intentions.

The sire, as he spoke, with a sad but firm face, had turned and taken down a musket from the wall, and now, he advanced to the door, waving his wife and daughter back.

"You will not be so foolish, Mr. Arden, as to resist," replied Hardy, "we are ten to your one. Open the door quietly, and I will promise that neither you nor your wife shall be harmed, though my lads must have free leave to help themselves of course, and Mistress Alice must make up her mind to accompany us."

The blood came and went in that old man's wintry cheek, like volcanic fires shooting up amid the snow; and his fingers trembled excessively as he nervously handled his piece; yet he did not utter a word in reply. But now Alice broke from her mother's arms and stepped quickly to the door, speaking eagerly.

"James Hardy," she said, yet her clear, silvery tones, notwithstanding her efforts at composure, were a little tremulous, "are you not ashamed to avow such baseness? What! assault a weak, defenceless girl, and her two aged parents. Depart while there is yet no sin upon your soul! Think better of what you propose to do, James Hardy, and do not commit a deed which will haunt you to your dying day."

A brutal oath was the only answer to this appeal, and a blow was dealt upon the door that made the house ring. The panel split into fragments. As the blow fell, Mr. Arden gently pushed his daughter back, and the click of his fire-lock was heard, while every lineament of his face grew rigid with desperate resolve. But the assailants, before repeating the blow, parleyed again.

"Will you open, I say; and without any further preachment?" asked Hardy, in an angry voice. "I should be sorry, Mr. Arden, to have you come to harm. But if you *will* resist, your blood be on your own head; for carry my purpose I will, so help me God!"

A shriek from the aged mother answered this terrible threat, and she would have clung to Alice, as if those weak, old arms could have protected her darling. But Alice herself did not give way to similar weakness: on the contrary, with a resolution and presence of mind above her years, she hurried to pile on the table what chairs and other furniture was near at hand, to strengthen the barricade.

The blows now fell in rapid succession, and soon a second panel was shattered into splinters. But the frame of the door was unusually massive, and, for sometime, stoutly resisted the efforts of the assailants. Those were moments of terrible suspense. The sire, nerved with the courage and energy of youth, thought

only of saving his daughter, and stood there, like a lion at bay. The mother had sunk into a chair, and was wringing her hands, weeping and calling on Heaven for aid by turns. Alice, with clasped hands, and lips moving in supplication, remained a pace or two behind her father as if to assist him in an emergency, yet gazing, with pale cheek and eyes wild with terror, on the shattered door, between the broken panels of which the forms of the assailants could now be discerned. Oh! how her fears and hopes alternated, as she saw the strong frame quivering under the blows, yet still resisting them. At last a crash, more terrible than any that had preceded, announced that some article far weightier than the butt of a musket had been brought up to beat in the door; and simultaneously the splinters flew in every direction into the room, and the stout frame tumbled in ruins to the floor. At the same instant her sire fired, and one of the foremost miscreants fell. A wild howl, as of a pack of angry wolves, arose from the Tories, and they rushed forward, in a dense mass, completely blocking up the entrance.

But their eagerness, for a time defeated their purpose, as they were in each others way. Besides, though the door had fallen from its hinges, the barricade remained to pass, and this could not be done in a moment. Its unexpected appearance induced the foremost to spring back. At this crisis, Mr. Arden, clubbing his musket, brought the heavy walnut stock down, with all the force of a father's despair, on the head of the nearest intruder. With a dull, crashing sound, it smote the skull of the aggressor, and he fell, a second victim. The rest recoiled immediately.

But it was only for an instant. The voice of Hardy, who had remained somewhat in the rear, was now heard, inciting them to vengeance.

"On—on," he shouted, "there is but one old man, and two women! A bold rush, before he could have recovered himself, would have given us the victory. What do you fear? Pick him off with a gun! Or, let me take the front—I'll drag the old toothless mastiff down, I warrant you."

A coarse laugh was the only answer to these words; and simultaneously one of the Tories fired. Mr. Arden's arm fell powerless at once. With a yell of savage exultation the assailants rushed forward at this sight, and bearing down the feeble barricade by the mere weight of numbers, poured into the apartment.

Alice, seeing her father's wound, had sprung to his side with a shriek, and flinging her arms around him, sought thus instinctively to shield him from harm. Facing the intruders, and forgetting her own peril, she addressed them in tones of agonized entreaty.

"Oh! spare him—spare my father," she cried—"Hardy—James—mercy!—he is an old man—"

She paused, and as she stood there with lips half parted, her beautiful hair dishevelled over her shoulders, even those rough men hesitated a moment, awed by her beauty, or moved by her piteous appeals.

It was a pause of breathless silence, which was prolonged by an unforeseen event; for suddenly, there swept by a strange, rushing sound, distant, yet approaching nearer. At first it seemed the wind among the trees, then the brawling of a torrent, and

the rapid trot of horsesmen. When the character of the noise became unmistakable, the Tories turned their faces anxiously toward each other. Nearer, nearer, nearer came the sound of those rapid hoofs! And now they were close at hand. A sort of stupor of bewilderment and alarm had, up to this moment, appeared to hold possession of Alice; but now, suddenly she rushed toward a window that looked on the road, uttering a succession of shrieks, and exclamations for succor.

"Help—help—here—for the sake of Heaven," she cried.

She could pronounce no more, for the strong arm of Hardy dragged her from the window, while his broad hand was placed over her mouth. But she had seen enough to know that succor was close at hand.

There was no moon indeed, but the stars shone brightly, and by their light she recognized about twenty horsemen, clad in the green uniform of Lee's legion. They had seen as well as heard her, she knew; for with a hurrah, they turned their horses aside into the yard of the dwelling, leaping the garden fence in gallant style.

CHAPTER II.

"A creature not too bright, nor good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles."

A FEW minutes, and the strife was over, if indeed that can be called a strife where the one side took to flight the instant the character of the other became known. Hardy himself, perceiving who his enemies were as he dragged Alice from the window, flung her angrily across the room, and sprang out the door, one of the first to seek safety in retreat. Flying into the neighboring wood, which approached on that side of the house to within twenty rods, the Tories effected their escape, with the exception of three, who were cut down by the troopers in the interval between the door and the forest.

Alice was kneeling by her father, who had fainted, when the doorway was again darkened by a shadow. Her first impression was that the Tories had returned, and she looked up in alarm. But the cry, that rose to her lips, subsided as she saw before her a tall and handsome form, attired as an officer of Lee's legion. The intruder lifted his cap courteously.

"I hope these villains have done no harm," he said, in bland tones. "Ah! he is wounded—your father, I presume," he continued, advancing and kneeling by Mr. Arden, whose hurts he proceeded to examine. There was but one, however, that in the arm, and this he pronounced comparatively slight. "Take courage, my dear lady, there is no danger—I have some knowledge of surgery—and see, he revives!"

There was something so gentle and kind in the tones and manner of the speaker, that Alice, on the first moment of leisure, looked at him with interest. She was surprised to see how handsome his face was, especially when lighted up by sympathy. Nothing could be more refined and delicate than his conduct. Stepping to the door, he had requested his men to

remain outside, only allowing one to enter, and he for the purpose of assisting to lift the wounded man to a bed. He then bared the arm, examined the wound, and tied it skilfully up, Alice aiding him whenever necessary. The mother, indeed, was still incapable of rendering the least assistance, for her aged nerves had not yet recovered entirely from their shock.

"He will do now very well," said the officer, "allow me, therefore, to retire. I am Lieutenant Stanhope, of Lee's mounted legion. We are attached to Greene's army, and have come into this district for a few days. I was going a mile or two further on to encamp, but I do not like to leave you unprotected; so we will bivouack close by. Farewell!" And with a graceful bow he was gone.

The next morning Stanhope called early and found Mr. Arden sitting up, and far on the road to recovery, his wound having been comparatively slight. From that hour the lieutenant was a constant visitor at the Ardens. The legion of Lee had been recruited from the best families of the middle states, so that to be an officer in that corps was a proof of unusual merit. Our hero had received the best education the colonies afforded, and was about embarking for Europe to pursue the study of his profession, when the war of Independence broke out, and changed the medical student into the soldier. Accustomed to the best circles of Philadelphia, then the wealthiest city in the colonies, he had, since he entered the army, been almost excluded from female society, a severe deprivation to one of his elegant and chivalrous tastes. His meeting with the refined and accomplished Alice Arden, in the wilds of upper Carolina, surprised, not less than fascinated him. He thought, and thought truly, that he had never seen her equal in grace and manner, much less in intelligence. Mr. Arden had not always been what he now was. Formerly a wealthy planter on Cooper River, he had gone abroad to educate his daughter, but during his absence a fraudulent steward had nearly ruined him, and on his return, he was forced to seek shelter on a little estate high on the Catawba, the sole remnant of his once large possessions. Here he had been residing for three years, totally forgotten by his old equals.

Alice was as sportive as she was intelligent; and it was this union of qualities, perhaps, which fascinated Stanhope. Of a superior intellect himself, he found a delight in conversation like hers. Having lived very secluded, her time had been chiefly spent in reading, and her mind accordingly was rich with acquired stores. Hour after hour would Stanhope sit, discussing favorite authors with her. Neither he nor she dreamed of danger. Indeed, as was natural to a disposition like hers, Alice railed at love. Rosalind could not have been more arch.

"Your sex are so vain," she would say, "that I wonder any woman of sense can gratify you, by loving you. There's not one of you worth our hearts. We give you our undivided affection, and you return it by sharing yours with a thousand rivals. Ambition, wealth and glory, these you pursue, as the real purposes of life; while you condescend only to amuse your leisure with us."

"But all men are not so," replied Stanhope: "can you not picture to yourself one who would love a wife above all earthly things, ay! treasure her every look and word as a holy thing in his inmost heart, yet give his attention also to glory or duty. Believe me, he cannot be a true man who is not either ambitious for distinction, for doing good, or for some other high purpose in life. And I can imagine no prize more noble for one of your sex or duty, than such a man, who will love as I have described."

There was an enthusiasm in his words that heightened the color on the cheek of Alice, but she rallied and continued.

"Oh! what a poet you would make. I declare you have drawn a perfect sir Charles Grandison, a sort of modern Sydney, redolent of the Arcadia; a very paragon of love and duty, chivalry, and all that! Your imagination runs away with you, Mr. Stanhope. Finish the picture, by supposing that this 'mirror of knighthood' would go to the world's end for his lady-love, or like Tasso's Rinaldo, dare the perils of enchanted grounds for her sweet sake. You read too many romances, I fear. Recollect Scuderi has gone out of fashion, and that Cervantes has jeered down Amadis of Gaul. Nobody but sentimental misses, or antiquated old maids, believe in such love now-a-days."

This silenced Stanhope for that time, but one day he said suddenly—

"I think you confess yourself a skeptic in love, Alice."

"I would not believe in it, if one rose from the dead. You don't know what an incorrigible creature I am."

"Not if one told you he loved!" As he spoke, his voice trembled slightly, though he strove to assume an air of banter.

"Not then! Who could trust such a profession?" she added quickly, looking aside; and then she hummed the words, "Men are deceivers ever!"

Stanhope sighed, but very faintly, yet still Alice detected the sigh; and perhaps her heart smote her, for she could not but have perceived, under his assumed indifference, a real seriousness. But Alice was wilful at times, as the best are, and she was in one of her wild moods now. Looking gaily up, she said—

"What a lack-a-daisical air you wear, Mr. Stanhope."

"Do I?" he said, rousing himself as from abstraction.

"Yes! and one would think you had been in love and jilted; and had resolved to make me your confidant and intercessor. But don't, I pray you! I shall begin to tire of you dreadfully, if you become sentimental. I liked you because you were animated; but positively you sighed, just now, as if your heart was breaking. What a splendid Niobe you would make, drenched in tears!"

Stanhope's face had betrayed a variety of emotions while she was thus speaking. Suddenly he seized her hand, looked her a minute earnestly in the face, then dropping those fair fingers as quickly as he had taken them, he said hurriedly—

"Farewell. I am not fit company for the gay

to-day; since to-morrow we move our quarters. But this is nothing to you—farewell!"

He rushed from her, sprang on his horse who stood at the door, and galloped down the road, never once turning to look back. Alice was taken by surprise. Not until his last words had she known that the legion was to march on the morrow; and with this knowledge, every trace of gaiety suddenly vanished from her heart. Stanhope had left her in anger, and perhaps forever! Her own foolish words, too, had sent him away thus. Bursting into tears, her first impulse was to rush to the window that overlooked the road; but he did not look back; and in a moment maidenly pride came to her aid, so that she hastily withdrew into the room, covered with burning blushes. Yet that night, when no eye could see her, and when her pillow hid her face even from the darkness itself, what tears of self-reproach Alice shed! For she now discovered that she loved. The most earnest hearts frequently wear a mask of gaiety, as the deepest rivers ever have the brightest ripples on the surface. Such had been Alice.

A tempest of stormy emotions raged in Stanhope's bosom as he galloped down the road. He had enjoyed the society of Alice too much to think of analyzing the real character of his feelings toward her, until the order to move his quarters woke him, like a thunderbolt, from his delicious dream, and revealed his true condition, by one instantaneous flash. At once he resolved to learn his fate from the lips of Alice. He was not without hopes that her interest in him was similar in character to that he felt for her; yet, like all who truly love, he feared more than he hoped. These fears increased when he stood in her presence, but especially when he approached the subject dearest to his heart.

"She saw my aim and wished to spare me the pain of a refusal. Oh! God—the dream of happiness is over forever."

He struck his brow with his clenched hand, as he thus spoke, and spurring his horse until the blood spouted under the sharp steel, dashed off again in full gallop. For hours he kept the saddle, going he knew not whither. In this rapid motion he found some alleviation for his emotions. At last, exhausted almost to stupefaction, he let the reins drop on the neck of his wearied animal, and in this mood reached his quarters after nightfall.

The next morning an orderly arrived with fresh commands, postponing the march of the troop another day. It was a welcome respite to Stanhope. Not that he thought of returning to the Ardens; but yet he knew not how to tear himself away from the vicinity. Once or twice it occurred to him that Alice might not have meant all she said, that she would repent, and that he would be summoned to her side. He little understood the sex, much less Alice. Now that she knew the true state of her heart, she bitterly reproached herself for the past, yet she would have endured a thousand deaths sooner than have betrayed, by a message, how dear he was to her.

"No, he must seek me again," she said, proudly, yet weeping, "and that he will never do."

All that day Stanhope remained in a state of feverish

excitement. Evening came, without a word from Alice. He was torn by conflicting emotions. Now he resolved to throw himself again at her feet, and remove all doubts by another rejection; now he called himself a fool, for thinking there could be room for doubt. At last he seized his cap and sword, and setting out on foot, found himself, without intending it, close to the house of Alice. There was a faint moon, and by its light he discerned a familiar form at the French window that opened into the garden. An irresistible impulse hurried him forward. Alice was in a deep reverie, and his noiseless tread did not arouse her, until he almost stood at her side. She started up, with a deep blush, while undisguised joy sparkled in her eyes.

"You here—I thought you had gone—" she exclaimed, in a tone of glad surprise, clasping his extended hand in both of hers: then, suddenly letting it fall, she drew back in confusion, exclaiming—"how you surprised me!" And there she stopped.

Stanhope's own feelings had undergone a rapid revulsion, for nothing could be warmer than her first welcome, nor did her present embarrassment dampen him. It rather increased his new born hopes. She was now trembling violently, and indeed had to lean for support against the window; while the flutter of her white kerchief betrayed how her bosom was agitated.

"Alice," he said, entering, and taking her hand, "Alice, you know now how I love you, one word, is there hope?"

She gave him a single glance and burst into tears.

Three hours later, they parted, mutually betrothed, by the consent of her parents. As he departed, Stanhope took a ring from his little finger, and said—

"This was my mother's, Alice; but I cannot put it to a holier purpose than to make it the gage of our betrothal. Give me, in exchange, that plain gold one you wear, and I promise never to part with it while life remains."

"Unless you cease to love me," added Alice, looking timidly into his eyes, as they exchanged rings.

"I am safe in allowing the exception," said he, smiling to reassure her. "Let Heaven here take witness to my vow to keep holy this troth-pledge!"

Just then a cloud sailed across the moon and threw a momentary shadow over them. Both looked up, Alice with a shudder. But, even that quickly, the cloud had gone; and their eyes meeting, with a smile of mutual love, even more quickly had the sadness faded from their hearts.

CHAPTER III.

"Wo to the English soldiery
That little dread us near."—BRYANT.

DURING the three weeks, whose lapse we have recorded in the preceding chapter, the great battle of the Cowpens had been fought. Though victory had attended our arms in that engagement, the number of Greene's troops was too few to make head against the combined forces of Cornwallis, and accordingly as soon as the Marquis, thirsting to revenge Tarleton's defeat, began the pursuit of Morgan, a retreat became

necessary. The army, in consequence, broke up from its old positions and retired on North Carolina. The history of the memorable retreat that ensued we presume to be familiar to our readers, and shall, therefore, not dwell upon it here.

Toward the close of the retreat, when the main army had nearly reached the Dan, a body of picked men was placed under the command of Col. Williams to form a rear-guard. In this corps was included the legion of Lee; and to them was assigned the task of bringing up the extreme rear. Mounted on active horses, they scoured the space between the two armies, keeping a constant watch on the enemy, halting, and starting again when he started. Frequently the advanced parties of the British, and the rear of Lee's legion were within musket shot of each other; but the enemy's dragoons never ventured on a pursuit, well knowing that the horses of the legion were swifter and faster than their own.

Greene had led Cornwallis to believe that he intended crossing the Dan at the upper ferries, where the latter knew he would have the American general in his power; but, in fact, had secretly collected boats lower down the river, and thither he turned off. He left the corps of Williams, however, to maintain the delusion, by marching in front of the Marquis on the old route. The stratagem succeeded. For awhile Cornwallis was completely deceived. Having kept the Marquis on the wrong scent as long as he thought advisable for the safety of the main army, Williams suddenly struck across the country, early one morning, in order to gain the high road leading to the lower ferries.

The little corps had halted for a late breakfast, the only meal allowed in the whole twenty-four hours, and was gathering around the fires, for the morning was cold with a drizzling rain, watching the meat on the coals, and inhaling the fragrance of the corn cake in the ashes, when a countryman, mounted on a lean horse, rode up and gave the startling intelligence that the enemy had discovered the ruse played on him, and was now in full pursuit. The countryman had been burning brushwood, he said, at his farm only four miles behind, when he saw the British coming up the road, and instantly taking the first horse he could find, had hurried to give the intelligence to his friends. Lee's legion was immediately despatched to reconnoitre. After proceeding two miles, with no sign of the enemy, Lee determined to return. He left Stanhope, however, with two dragoons, to keep a look out. The countryman, still asserting that the British were close at hand, asked for a better horse, as his own was worn down, and in case of a pursuit, would ensure his being overtaken. Accordingly the buglar of the troop, a lad of tender years, was dismounted, and made to exchange horses with the countryman. Then Lee striking into the woods, left the party.

Our hero and his guide rode forward, but, in less than ten minutes, suddenly came in sight of the British van. So close was the enemy that no hope of safety existed for our little party, except in instant flight. Down the road accordingly they sped, the enemy's dragoons giving chase with a hurrah. Three men against thirty was fearful odds, but Stanhope and his

soldiers were well mounted, and scoured over the ground as if on winged horses. The main body of the pursuers soon fell behind, but four or five, whose steeds were blooded ones, held their way, and even gained on the fugitives. The race had continued for more than a mile, when, all at once, Stanhope heard a shrill cry, and looking back he saw that the dragoons had drawn in, having discovered the little buglar in the woods at the edge of the road, where the lad, unable to escape, had taken refuge. Our hero was not too far off to hear what passed, yet was too distant to render succor in time. He could distinguish the little fellow, whom he knew to be unarmed, pleading for quarter; but in vain. The boy had got down from his horse, and was on his knees in the road, where, with uplifted hands, he besought the dragoons to spare him for the sake of his mother. He addressed those who were inexorable. Stanhope saw the flash of a sabre, and the helpless child fell to speak no more, wounded by a deep gash in his head. Again and again the sabres of the five miscreants wreaked their vengeance on that poor boy. Stanhope could endure the sight no longer.

"I will avenge him," he cried, "though at the cost of life. You will follow, comrades—wheel—charge!"

With eyes flashing as he spoke, he turned his steed sharp around, and, accompanied by the two soldiers, galloped to the desperate encounter. The dragoons saw him coming and advanced to meet him. At the first shock the foremost of them went down beneath Stanhope's indignant arm, the sword cleaving his skull to the very chine.

His two companions had been equally successful, having actually ridden over their antagonists; and the others would have fled but that the remainder of the dragoons were now within pistol shot. Stanhope might have seen that he and his followers must finally be overpowered, but with feelings still boiling at the sight of the brutal murder of that lad, he could not pause to think.

"Vengeance!" he shouted, turning on another.

But at this instant a wild huzzah was heard behind, which proceeded from the rest of the legion; for the

sound of the pistols fired at Stanhope in the pursuit, had reached the ears of Lee, who hurried to aid his lieutenant. At sight of the solid masses of the American cavalry, thundering along the road, the joy of Stanhope broke all bounds, especially as, simultaneously, the British dragoons turned to flee.

"Hurrah," he cried, rising in his stirrups, and, waving his sabre on high, "we have them now. Let us be first in at the end of the chase."

He gave spurs to his horse as he spoke, and attended by his two companions, both splendidly mounted like himself, sped along the road. It was not long before one of the dragoons was overtaken, and Stanhope's sabre was already flashing around his head, when the man cried for quarter. A moment's hesitation, and then Stanhope's better feelings prevailed.

"Take it," he said, as he shot by, like an arrow, "and report yourself a prisoner to the legion behind."

On drove the fugitives, and on followed those three legionaries, Stanhope gradually gaining on his companions until a considerable distance ahead of them. Every few moments another dragoon was overtaken. Each one in turn, without attempting resistance, like a craven at once cried for quarter; and to each it was granted, until fifteen of the enemy, including their captain, were thus taken prisoners and sent back on parole. Hurried away by excitement, Stanhope forgot how far he was from the legion. Just before him was a dragoon whom he would overtake, with a few more leaps, when suddenly, at a turn in the road, he saw the whole British army in front. At the same instant he heard a shout from the nearest of his companions—

"Fly, fly, lieutenant," were his words, "we are surrounded!"

Stanhope looked over his shoulder, and found that the warning was true, but had come too late. Most of the captured dragoons, perceiving that the rest of the legion had not pursued, had suddenly resolved to turn the tables on their three captors. Accordingly they were coming down the road, in nearly a solid mass, cutting off all hope of escape from our hero.

(TO BE CONTINUED)